Direct Action

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it's payback time!

INSIDE

- Sodexho-£££ out of Misery ★
- HEman Management ★
- Inhuman Resources ★
- Anarchism vs Marxism ★
- GM Resistance Latest ★
- International News ★

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Direct Action

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It's payback time.
Your theme is mismanagement, and here's 36 pages of ammunition.

Kill Microsoft

Bill Gates got over $14 million PER DAY, EVERY DAY, for every one of the last 14 years of the 20th Century. One in ten people on this planet live on less than a dollar a day. Bill Gates may work hard, but nowhere near as hard as the billions who scrape by in sweatshops and fields – and PC component factories. How can anyone support an economic system which judges Bill Gates to be worth the same as 20 million people? Well, there are only 3 arguments:

1; some people are cleverer than others, so they deserve to 'make it' – this is the same logic which says disabled/less able people should starve.

2; people start the same but some get the 'edge', because they get the chance/encouragement to – in other words, the 'silver spoon' scenario.

3; some people are lazy and can't be bothered, so they don't make it, while others do. Most managers will pick the third one – the idea being that they worked hard and honest for their status and money. Frankly, they can pick whichever they like – obscene wealth is borne of an obscene system, and it is wrong, full stop.

'Kill Microsoft' graphic from:www.kmfms.com

Toilet mismanagement

'Mismanagement' is a bit of an oxymoron. How can management not be 'mis-'? (Unless you replace it with 'self-'). Is there such a thing as a 'good' manager, or does the bastard mind come with the territory?

The analogy that the shit always floats to the top is an endearing one. Particularly, we suspect, for anyone who has experienced a typical boss-worker relationship. From the worker end, obviously.

But it's not that simple. All sorts of things float to the top. It's just that everything turns to shit pretty soon after it gets there. And let's not follow the analogy to sinkers and floaters, lest we give the game away that the DA team has the collective sense of humour of an 11-year-old who had trouble potty-training.

For middle management (or one-up-from-the-bottom management), the situation is rather complex. Those on the way up must put up with side-swipes, as well as getting the chance to kick down at those below them. But for the top managers and leaders, with clear blue sky above, the situation is simple; they never fail to be or become twisted. Invariably, stuffing their (by now already bulging) pockets and/or ego and lining their nests is almost as high a priority as kicking everyone below in their belief that they must stop them climbing up and stealing the top dog slot. Incidentally, nest linings vary from cash to desperate self-promotion in the vain hope of immortality (Clinton?).

None of this is human nature – and even if it was, we are supposed to know better than to give in to flawed instinct. There are no excuses. It has to be said though; it is not the leaders and bosses that are at the heart of the problem. True, they come in more or less nasty forms, but this may just be due to years spent honing their sadism skills. To the twisted and conditioned boss, their everyday behaviour feels like the simple necessities of survival. But pretty much everyone else can see what the emperor is really wearing.

Capitalism encourages and rewards dictatorship. But any boss who absolves responsibility for their actions by blaming it on 'the real world' is fair game, particularly if they don't actively oppose that 'real world' system (so that's Tony Blair, probably your boss… and the list goes on from there).

Everyone featured under mismanagement in these pages is fair game. Racist and homophobic government, for making cheap capital by treating asylum seekers worse than prisoners of war (p.18) and censoring sexuality (p.24). University bosses, for dancing along to the government tune, and leading their learned (sic) institutions into the abyss (p.6). Personnel, for dancing along to the bosses tune (p.4). The judiciary, for dancing along to the politicians' tunes (p. 21, p.22). Much dancing, no fun.

The saddest fact is that the old adage remains truer than ever; POWER CORRUPTS. Create any organisation or system of leaders and you have a corruption machine, programmed to produce people who will, through their experience of leadership, get used to being nasty to other people. Justification is not the issue – the big problem is the mistaken acceptance of authority.

The revolutionary heritage of the 20th century was characterised to a major extent by Marxism. The revolutionary future of the 21st century has already all-but shed the last vestiges of Marxism in favour of anarchism. Yesterday, we thought we needed our own revolutionary leaders. Today, we have realised they are just another part of the problem. Now, we know better. The future is going to be solid solidarity and co-operation. This is how authority will be overcome (p.27, p.31). Read on, enjoy, and remember; reading is never going to be enough.

regulars

7-13 actions+comment

8; Fat Cats in sheep's clothing.
9; New Labour means monkey business. Asylum Actions.
10; Casualisation kills.
11; In the trough. 58 Dead? – no, over 2000.
12; Pride and prejudice. Birmingham action against capitalism.

Sidelines: *New Labour; Cheap labour; Slam Islam; Lesbian Avengers; Desperate destruction; Mobile update; Lindo family; Shopping Asda; Safe criminals; Political parenting; Oil slaves; Solidarity appeal.*

15 international news

Canada, Korea, USA, Ireland, Czech Republic, Colombia, South Africa, West Bank, Mexico, Bolivia.

22 globalfocus: Another midsummer murder

Who was Shaka Sankofa and why did the US state kill him?

26 notes+letters

Monkey busines; Millennium dome; Tribute to Jim Allen.

27 ideas for change: Self-management

Creating a self-managed society goes beyond mere democracy.

34 DA resources

SolFed info., forthcoming events, campaigns, actions, friends and neighbours.

reviews: 28-30

mismanagement

The Couriers are Revolting! History of the Despatch Industry Workers Union 1989-92 - Des Patchrider. Beaten Up, Fitted Up, Locked Up! Mark Barnsley & 'The Pomona Incident' - A Miscarriage of Justice.

music and festivals

FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL: No ocean separating our desire for justice - compilation.
The Big Green Gathering.

periodicals

Lobster.
Index On Censorship.

books

Michael G Smith: Language and Power in the Creation of the USSR, 1917-1953.
The Ingerland factor. Home truths from football. Edited by Mark Perryman.

theme: **mismanagement**

4 Inhuman Resources

The last two decades have seen an explosion in Human Resource Management. Behind all the teamwork talk and management training courses lurks a smiling monster.

6 Management take-over

Universities used to be collegiate, well-meaning and politely run (sic). Now, those nasty captains of capitalism have taken the helm. The managers have arrived.

13 Naff off NAFTA

The GM food fight; one battle in war for corporate dominance.

14 Organsnatchers

The ultimate logic of capitalism is that to survive, you must find something to sell. Even if it is your body parts.

18 'NASS'ty, brutish & short-changed

Essential guide to the new National Asylum Support Service (NASS). Plus; where it leaves asylum seekers and the pro-asylum resistance.

21 Miscarriage or travesty?

Miscarriages of justice - still being 'defended' by the incompetent forces of law and order. Plus; Justice for Mark Barnsley.

24 Some are less equal than others

Getting personal: gay politics in Britain after the Clause 28 debacle.

31 closerlook: Anarchism vs. *Marxism*

Economic theory and the reality of everyday life; anatomy of a 150-year feud.

Mismanagement at work

INHUMAN

The last two decades have seen an explosion in Human Resource Management (HRM), formerly known as Personnel. No biggish company is now without a Human Resource Department. Despite the impact of HRM, little debate has taken place within the left as to the threat it poses to people. Even more worrying, it is often dismissed as a sad joke, complete as it is with convoluted language and appeals for teamworking.
Big mistake.

HRM is the main management vehicle for driving home the advantages gained by the smashing of organised labour since Thatcher. It is designed to change the culture within the workplace, and to prevent any chance of a return to effective workplace organisation. In other words, HRM is a serious and ongoing threat to working people everywhere.

The origins of HRM are firmly rooted in free market philosophy. The name itself demonstrates that workers are seen as a resource, to be treated as other resources, such as raw materials, finance and machinery, to produce a commodity or service that can be sold for profit. However, people are not inanimate objects, but are capable of acting in their own interests and against the interests of the capitalist. Thus, the aim of HRM is to manipulate people at work to make them think their interests and the bosses' interests coincide. It is a means of social control aimed at reducing conflict between capital and labour. If workers can be convinced that their success is bound up with the success of the company, they can be easily manipulated. They come closer to the free market idea of a raw material that can be utilised in the best interests of capitalism. Free will is no longer a negative, but a positive. Workers begin to use their creativity in the interests of capitalism. They become self-exploiting – a delightful state of affairs for the boss.

In Britain, HRM has been specifically put to work to break down the traditional "us and them" workplace culture which divides management and workers due to their diametrically opposed interests. The main idea is to replace confrontation (which is not good for business) with workers' co-operation with management. New Labour epitomises the HRM philosophy, and Tony Blair could have made a 'perfect' HRM manager (sic). In his TUC conference speech, he warbled: "The sense of 'them' and 'us' and the disastrous legacy of early mid-20th century politics must be ended... today, management and labour have mutual interest in a company's success."

Hi Ho

The centrepiece of modern HRM is the concept of team work. Through team briefings, focus groups, and various forms of workplace meetings, management tries to create the illusion of democratic workers' participation, as the means to get workers to identify with the company and its aims/needs. The plan is to get workers to think 'free market', ie. that they are really in competition with workers in other companies to produce the most cost-effective means of bringing goods/services to the market. With public sector workers, the same applies, except they are posed as being in competition with the private sector, which could take over the running of the service they provide at any moment.

To complete the illusion, the work environment, where teams work together with bosses, and where the 'customer is always right', must above all, be a 'caring' one. Customer care is crucial to the HRM concept of the world as a market place. For many, the entire world of work is presented in terms of meeting customer needs. The company/worker interest can only be met by meeting the needs of the customer. Only this can lead to success (which is generally hinted at being shared, but of course, never really is). Should workers put their interest first, then company efficiency would suffer and the competitive edge lost. Then, everyone will suffer.

I NOT WE

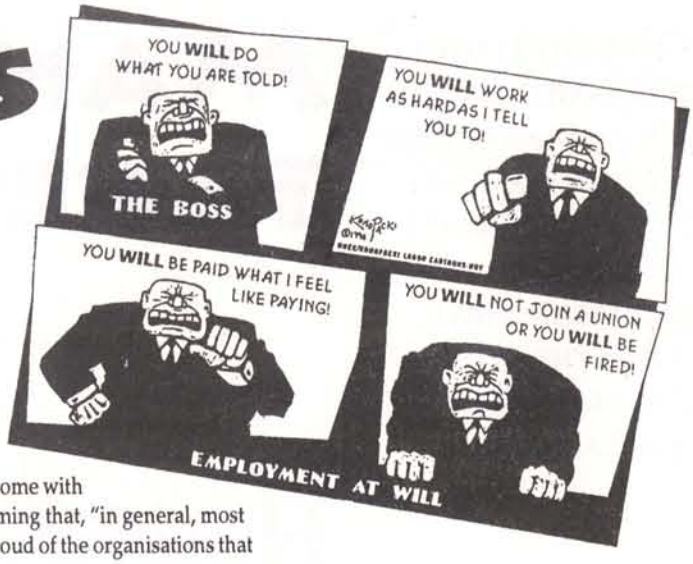
Somewhat subtly, but importantly, team working philosophy is individual-based, not collective-based. Workers are supposed to see themselves as an individual member of the company team. Collective agreements, which applied to all/many, are replaced with individual contracts. Collective pay is replaced with individual performance-related pay. Individuality and individual performance are the workplace ethos that drives the HRM team approach. Workers work in teams for the greater good, but all compete with each other over who can achieve most to ensure greater company efficiency.

Those who put company interest first, for example, by willingly working the longest hours, are rewarded by increased pay and promotion. Pay and conditions is no longer a collective concern related to the cost of living, but a reward won through competition between 'colleagues' to reach ever-greater productivity. Creating a competitive spiral for rewards which may or may not ever arrive is the HRM ethos. 'Wastage rates' (stress, alienation, sickness, 'dropouts' and people moving on) are inevitably high. This is accepted as part of the 'real world'.

The concepts underlying HRM and the structures it attempts to bring to the workplace are often greeted with scepticism and apathy. However, just because people resist being taken in does not mean HRM doesn't work. Furthermore, it is not static, but is constantly being redefined and developed. Whole university departments are given over to the task of getting and staying ahead of workers' common sense.

So, the HRM masterplan is to get workers to forget each other in favour of helping the bosses make profits, instead of helping each other and forgetting the bosses' profits. Those who doubt its success and influence have only to look at the spread of individual contracts, multi-skilling, performance-related pay, and the myriad of teamwork and meeting/briefing paraphernalia that it

RESOURCES



has spawned. It has even united management in apparently 'competing' firms, around the common purpose of tranquillising the workforce. Managers have seen their common interest across firms (despite the illusion of competition), and have latched on to HRM as a means of launching a united attack aimed at undermining any potential for collective approach amongst the workforce. HRM methods have been put to use in undermining workplace trade unionism and preventing its development.

Union bosses

While working people remain deeply sceptical of HRM, the trade union movement, far from providing alternatives or resistance, is increasingly encouraging its development. The weakened, marginalised union bosses will take any opportunity which justifies their existence. They are jumping on the HRM bandwagon, offering to 'sell' the HRM partnership approach to members, in return for being allowed to recruit in the workplace with the tacit support of management. In short, the unions are being incorporated into HRM.

USDAW, the shopworkers' union, recently signed a deal with Tesco based on the idea of workplace forums. Workplace forums have been set up, where workers meet together with management to discuss workplace problems. These store forums send delegates to regional forums, which, in turn, send delegates to a national forum. The result is that workers have little choice; either put up and shut up or voice their concerns to a management-run, management-organised meeting. The national forum now negotiates pay, not the union. In effect, USDAW not longer exists as an independent organisation; it has been incorporated into management-run, management-controlled structures. In return, management actively encourages union membership. So far, this has resulted in 22,500 new USDAW members within Tesco alone.

USDAW is not an isolated case. The TUC has now adopted the HRM partnership approach. At a special TUC partnership conference last year, Tony Blair, the Secretary of State for Industry, Stephen Byres, and union leaders and employers who had set up partnership agreements (including from both Tesco and USDAW), spun the HRM spin to massed ranks of union leaders. Byres pledged £5 million to set up a partnership fund to create a "new climate of partnership" in order to ensure that the unions "can make a continuing contribution to the prosperity of their members and the business in which they work." The TUC blurb duly noted; "all agreed that Britain works best when unions and employers work together", and that employers at the conference agreed "they were able to manage change more effectively and believed that partnership added real value to the organisation". Blair illustrated how out of touch he and the TUC unions have become with everyday life by claiming that, "in general, most people at work are proud of the organisations that employ them".

The TUC Partnership Centre is now up and running, attached to the new Management Centre in Birmingham. Part of its role will be to ensure that union officials are equipped with 'partnership skills'. As the TUC central industrial policy "New Unionism in the Workplace" states; "the modern role of the trade union requires a very different portfolio of skills from collective bargaining, as traditionally understood. Joint problem-solving skills are not the same as negotiating skills, and partnership also puts a premium on facilitation, brokering, listening and consulting. Further greater union involvement in the organisational planning process requires an understanding of business issues and economics".

No joke, one option

The reality is no joke. While people remain sceptical of HRM, they are increasingly faced with a united front of both unions and management, arguing that theirs and the managers' interests coincide. There is little alternative but to take individual concerns to some form of joint worker-management body, where the agenda is set and controlled by management in the interests of management. The emerging union role simply confirms the fact that union management, like workplace management, look out for themselves. Only one option exists for creating an effective opposition to HRM; effective workplace organisation within which people can come together as workers and discuss their common interest and how best to confront management. The only way to ensure the 'effective' bit is to keep both union and workplace management out of the picture.

It would be a mistake to suggest that HRM has won. Its whole premise - that there can be common interest between workers and management - is patently absurd. However much HRM rhetoric may try to disguise the fact, workers are getting ever-worsening pay and conditions. The inevitability of confrontation between management and workers stems from the enduring reality that capitalism seeks only to exploit labour in the pursuit of profit. And when the confrontation stems from workers' organisations, formed directly by workers in their workplaces, then HRM will have its work cut out.

The emerging union role simply confirms the fact that union management, like workplace management, look out for themselves

Next Issue:

- ☐ Sickness and Work
- ☐ Surviving a Small Businesses job

..Plus Football, Crime and War...

See p.34 for bargain sub details...

UNIVERSITIES USED TO BE COLLEGIATE, WELL-MEANING AND POLITELY RUN (SIC). NOW, THOSE NASTY CAPTAINS OF CAPITALISM HAVE TAKEN THE HELM. THE MANAGERS HAVE ARRIVED.

MANAGEMENT TAKE-OVER

Higher Education (HE) has a new breed of senior managers. Out has gone all that collegiate nonsense and in has come early-80s macho management. The 'good old days' have officially been replaced by the 'mass higher education experience'.

Students are units (and cash units at that) to be recruited and retained. Lecturers are there to teach as many cash units as possible. Their job is to make sure the all-important students are trained to pass through the system so outcomes are 'healthy'. They also often have to bring some money in and do some research too.

Full-time researchers also do commercial work, and get papers published to attract more money from industry or the more or less universally vilified Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). Every 4 years, a mad scramble ensues as every department frantically bids for the next 4 years worth of government research funding. The only things worse than the RAE are the myriad of suggested alternatives from the powers that be. Not surprisingly, research has increasingly become based on what will attract money from industry and what will get published in the journals.

Many researchers, like lecturers nowadays, are on casual contracts, low paid, and have little or no security. Temporary staff provide a 'flexible resource' for managers to fill in the gaps in teaching on core modules (ie. ones that cannot be quietly dropped).

Of course Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are not all students and academics. There is a whole raft of what are often referred to as 'support staff' - the K.Y. jelly of higher education. Support staff come in a variety of shapes, sizes and forms. Most remain unnoticed until something goes wrong and they are needed (either to put it right or to blame). The only other time they get noticed is once a year, when someone puts a pie chart in the annual report showing there are huge numbers of them and "wouldn't it be more cost effective to trim the numbers a bit?"

HEIs are not self-cleaning – then again neither are some students and academics (boom boom!) Lecture theatres do not grow out of the ground, fully painted with seats and chairs, overhead projectors, white boards, lights, and already knee deep in crisp packets. Cleaners, porters, maintenance staff and other manual workers are the lowest paid of university employees and amongst the most disregarded (see Education Worker, Summer 2000).

Then there are the clerical/administrative workers, who receive, collect and collate information, process it and fill in the tidal waves of government and quango forms which are essential for the running of a university these days. There is a form to fill in for every possible question in HE. The number of forms is only challenged by the number of committees, working groups and sub-groups considering the response to the government's latest missive. Incidentally, at the other end, there are a whole host of government and quango type bodies who have the job of checking that HEIs are filling in the right forms. There are currently 5 government departments, 6 research councils and 4 funding councils with a direct stake in further and higher education, plus the local authorities, Training and Enterprise Councils and the new regional strands of government. A recent Times Higher Education Supplement headline proclaimed, "Millions go down the drain in audit fiasco" – reassuring it 'aint.

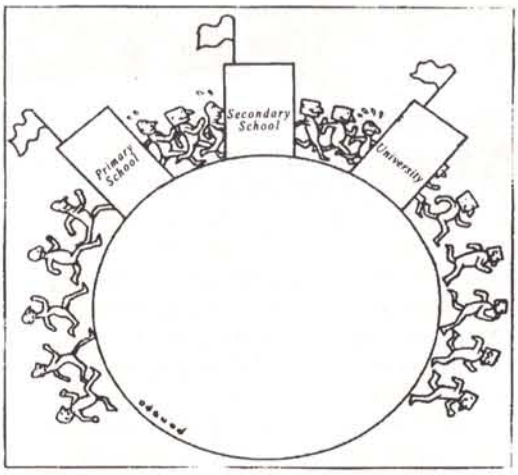
NON-SOLIDARITY

HE workers are somewhat self-contained and isolated from each other. They are in a whole variety of unions. Lecturers might be in NATFHE or AUT, depending on the history of the institution where they work. Clerical/administrative staff are usually in Unison, except for those in AUT. Cleaners, porters, technicians and other manual workers are usually in the GMB and MSF, but not always. Worse still, these unions are often antithetical to each other. AUT and NATFHE have been continuing their long-running hostilities since the binary divide between polytechnics and universities was abolished in 1992. Both sides distrust the others, and the deeply ingrained snobbism in the old Universities is blatantly on display in the AUT. Indeed, the AUT is more of a club than a union, and is having some difficulty getting to grips with the current reality that things have gone far enough and that industrial action is about solidarity. They cannot quite see that arch snobbery, individualism and standing on the edge shouting "but, no, I am important, really, I am" gets you nowhere.

THEY CANNOT QUITE SEE THAT ARCH INDIVIDUALISM, SNOBBERY AND STANDING ON THE EDGE SHOUTING "BUT, NO, I AM IMPORTANT, REALLY, I AM" GETS YOU NOWHERE.

While divisions exist between lecturers, students, manual, and clerical/administrative staff, there are also divisions between central services and the faculties/departments/schools, and between different roles

NEW STRONG-ARM MANAGEMENT CAN BE SEEN ACROSS THE HE SECTOR. THE POST-1992 INSTITUTIONS ARE MOST NOTICEABLE SINCE THEY ARE SQUEEZED HARDER ON FUNDING BY THE GOVERNMENT



within these units. In other words, for the most part, the whole place is a myriad of complex, over-lapping and interrelated little clans and tribes all having to work with each other. Consequently, management has come to involve the game of divide and ride rough-shod over everyone. All the simpler for the fact that the dividing bit has usually already been done for them.

MEDIEVAL MINDSET

There are distinct differences between HEIs according to historical factors and location. In England, the system goes back to the foundation of Oxford and Cambridge in the 12th century. Originally clerical institutions, the structure of colleges, with management by chancellors, vice-chancellors, deans, councils and senates, plus all the robe wearing which is prevalent throughout the university system, stems from those olden churchified times. As more universities were created, they followed this collegiate system. All were intended to provide somewhere for gentlemen to study to become vicars, doctors, lawyers and the like - 'socialising' the elite. It was not until the late 19th century that the next lot of universities were created, the redbrick universities - the upstart industrialists wanted somewhere to educate their children.

Nevertheless, when the Robins report was published in 1963, there were still only 24 universities in Britain as a whole. The result of the Robins report was the creation of a number of additional universities - and the polytechnics. But this was not the birth of mass higher education. Even in the late 1980s, only around 12-13% of the population went to HE. They were still 'socialising' the elite. They still are, but undoubtedly, a lot more people now go, with over 30% participating, and with a much bandied-around target of 50%. Most of the growth has been within existing social groups. There has been a big increase in the number of women, but only very slow expansion in the participation of what your sociologist would probably call the working class. In large sections of society, it remains very unusual for anyone to study at Further Education (FE) level, let alone HE.

Government control is a relatively new phenomenon. For most of their history, universities have been autonomous private institutions. It was not until last century that substantial amounts of funding came from central government, and not until after the Second World War that it exceeded 50%. It is currently around 70% across the sector as a whole. With increasing funding from Government, it just can't help sticking its nose in.

The result is a highly centralised, bureaucratically controlled system. The politicians like strong-arm HEI managers because they can be seen schmoozing with them and sharing the credit if they are 'successful' and they have a fall person when it all goes wrong. Thames Valley University (TVU) is a case in point. The Vice-Chancellor there was a bit of a maverick. For a while, they got feted by the media and the politicians, then the bad publicity started and the politicians moved out of shot so fast the dust didn't settle for months.

TOP DOGS, OLD TRICKS

The sheer volume of work in what are now much larger institutions with endless Government forms and procedures has led to the collegiate structures being increasingly bypassed or just plain ignored by vice-chancellors and their senior management teams. The recent dispute at Derby University started when the Vice-Chancellor took the University out of the national pay scheme, whilst claiming to be implementing it. Such double-dealing is typical of modern HE reality. NATFHE called for an academic boycott, but problems at Derby haven't gone away, and forced redundancies are on the way. The action has (hopefully) put on hold other HEI bosses' intentions to opt out of national pay agreements, though at places like Sheffield Hallam, the Vice-Chancellor appears to be champing at the bit to force through the opt-out. It is even worse in FE. Also in Sheffield, Sheffield College staff took industrial action following the issuing of jobs at risk notices whilst many staff were on holiday.

Such examples of the new strong-arm management can be seen across the HE sector. The post-1992 institutions are most noticeable, since they already had more management-orientated structures, and, frankly, they are squeezed harder on funding by the Government. Redundancies are on the cards at Northumbria, Hertfordshire and Guildford (where industrial action is likely), plus at least ten other institutions, as senior managers enforce their solutions to the problems created by central government short-termism. In many more places, 'effective' redundancies (pay-offs, ending of fixed-term and 'non-permanent' contracts, etc.) are now a regular annual

(cont'd overleaf...)

sidelines

NEW LABOUR, CHEAP LABOUR

North Ayrshire Council has a website which proclaims us to "invest in North Ayrshire". Fairly standard stuff, until the bit which boasts that workers in the area get paid a full 12% less than the national average. The low wages are described as one of the key attractions of the area. Especially for businesses looking for cheap labour, apparently. Yes, you guessed, North Ayrshire is a solid Labour Council.

SLAM ISLAM

Women's groups in Spain are trying to get a book by one of Spain's foremost Muslim leaders banned. In "Women in Islam", by Mohamed Kemal Mostafa, instructions are given as to how men can beat their wives without leaving any external marks. As has been pointed out, the book clearly contravenes Spanish legislation protecting women from violence. Translations into Arabic and English are planned.

LESBIAN AVENGERS

In June, the Lesbian Avengers, who stopped a bus owned by Stagecoach in London's Piccadilly and painted it pink (see DA15), were in court. Two women had the charges against them dropped. The other five pled guilty, and were ordered to pay over £2,000 in costs and compensation, while three of them were ordered to do 60 hours' community service. The painting spree was in protest at the campaign waged by Stagecoach Chairman Brian Souter to keep Section 2A of the Local Government Act 1986, universally known as Section 28, on the statute books in Scotland. Although some of the money has been raised at Pride in London and Brighton, help is still needed. Any surplus will be used to support future "queer direct action projects". So give generously, and make cheques out to Pink Bus, 56a Infoshop, 56 Crampton Street, LONDON SE17.

sidelines

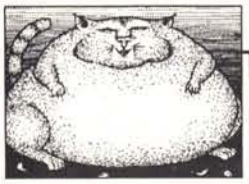
DESPERATE DESTRUCTION

Workers at a bankrupt French textile factory were accused of eco-terrorism by the government and environmentalists when they poured some 5,000 litres of sulphuric acid solution into a stream. 150 workers locked themselves in after the Cellatex Viscose factory went into liquidation. They took desperate action after demanding compensation for their loss of jobs. The factory is in Givet, an area of high unemployment and industrial decline along the Belgian border. The fire brigade attempted to stop the acid reaching the River Meuse, of which the stream is a tributary. Meanwhile, some of the workers apparently threatened to blow the factory up.

The environment is innocent; it is the profiteers who need to be held to ransom. While the occupation is very much one of today's actions of choice for anarcho-syndicalists, putting the occupied factory to some use for the community and workers just might be more positive.

MOBILE UPDATE

Residents have been taking direct action against erection of a mobile phone mast on Railtrack land near homes in Brayside Road, Burnage, Manchester (see DA15). Now, Orange has been refused planning permission to go ahead on the site. Direct action gets the goods? Unfortunately, it is not the end of the story. Apparently, back in 1997, Orange were given permission for erection of a mast a mere 5 metres away from the successfully opposed one!! Local people have reiterated their opposition to any mast in the general area. They have promised to take whatever action is necessary to physically stop the construction, if necessary. Contact Manchester SF for more info (p.34).



FATCATS IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

No luck on the lottery? Then consider a job with the MSF (Manufacturing, Science and Finance union). Once you're in, all you have to do is get wind of some shady goings on, blow the whistle and get unfairly dismissed before walking off with a six figure payment. Recently, three former MSF employees have done just that.

Marcia Solomon, a secretarial assistant, started the ball rolling when she happened upon £35,000 worth of cheques made out to Roger Lyons (general secretary) and Nelson Mendes (head of finance) from a supposedly defunct bank account that actually contained £160,000. Solomon was then sacked for gross misconduct. In July, she settled for £140,000 after her employment tribunal was halted when it was obvious that MSF couldn't sustain its allegation that she had acted 'maliciously'.

Solomon's original allegations were investigated by assistant general secretary, John Chowcat. However, he seemed to take the word 'investigation' a little too literally for Lyons' liking and found himself dismissed, also for gross misconduct, after uncovering a string of false expense claims made by Lyons. Chowcat was paid off with another £250,000 of MSF members' money.

Next to walk was north Thames regional officer, Howell John, sacked for allegedly leaking information on Lyons' lavish lifestyle. And, true to form, to prevent their corrupt manoeuvrings being aired in public at another employment tribunal, also in July, Lyons and co. authorised another £200,000 pay off plus car.

With around £750,000 of MSF members' money already spent on covering Lyons' arse, it is no surprise to hear increasing calls for him to resign and for an independent forensic investigation of the union's books. For the moment, though, Lyons is hanging on. But for how much longer? Another employment tribunal is looming with the threat of more revelations of Lyons' wrong-doings. This time it involves Bryan Keegan, Lyons' former chauffeur, who was sacked after claiming £7,000 in back overtime payment. This indicates Lyons' true mentality. He'd begrudge a union employee their rightfully earned wages, yet spend over 100 times that amount in trying to cover his own tracks. For a union that claims to defend whistleblowers elsewhere, the treatment of their own whistleblowers is disgraceful. Still, six-figure settlements soften the blow somewhat. Not sure that MSF members would see it that way, though.

(...cont'd from last page)

event. This is not to say the red brick universities are having an easy time. At the University of Salford, senior management, led by the Vice-Chancellor, are planning forced redundancies. Like many HEIs, Salford has been under permanent reorganisation for years. The general tactic seems to be to keep everyone milling around so fast they lose any grasp of reality - the very model of strong arm management. Politicians love it, after all, it is exactly how government works. All you need are lots of commissions and committees to look at things, to consult, draw up plans and what have you. This has the double advantage of first delaying having to do anything, then, by the time anything is done, people are so pleased the suspense is ended, they don't really care what the outcome is. It also allows those in charge to set up consultations at a distance, so that whatever the conclusions, they can cherry pick what they want, whilst all the while 'just following the recommendations'.

THE MIDDLE WAY

In short, the rise in strong-arm management is not surprising, and it is a direct result of government interference in HE. As a mass HE sector has become inevitable, the main preoccupation of governments has been to get it at the cheapest price possible, and, particularly with New Labour, while keeping ever-closer tabs on what is going on. It was all right for academia to be vaguely about 'socialising' the elite when it was only the elite and its offspring passing through (with the odd token pleb just to keep the gene pool healthy). Now 'socialising' the elite has been replaced by 'training' middle management - and there will soon be a massive over-supply of trainee middle managers. The signs are that it is already happening.

HE growth has been mainly away from science, engineering, social sciences, languages and the like, where it is needed. Management, business studies and specialist management trainee programmes like information technology, leisure and tourism, etc. have been the main growth areas. More and more pressure has been put on universities to deliver 'what industry wants' - a ready supply of malleable would-be high flyers for dead-end middle management careers with limited prospects. There is no need for 50% of the population to be on the fast track to big money and big power, there just isn't that much big money and big power to go round, even in Blairite distopia.

In order to produce graduates for the treadmill of mediocrity, elite 'excellence' has been abandoned, but for what? The problems with HE are not that not everybody goes through it, but that it is not available to everyone. Privilege gives access and, once gained, access reinforces privilege. In other words, the problems with HE remain, and for those who do get access, it offers a generally cheaper experience to that promised. At the same time, the working conditions of all staff will continue to be undermined - work, stress and alienation loads will continue to go up; pay, security of employment and job satisfaction go down. The ivory towers have joined the real world.

Next issue of Education Worker, free bulletin of the Education Workers' Network (EWN) is out now. For a copy (or several), contact: EWN, P.O. Box 29, SWDPO, Manchester M15 5HW, UK
E-mail: ewn@scandrac.demon.co.uk
Web: www.scandrac.demon.co.uk/ewn/

New Labour means MONKEY BUSINESS

The Public Interest Disclosures act is now a year old. Better known as 'the whistle blowers' law', it was intended to protect workers who are victimised after publicising their bosses, who may be flouting Health and Safety regulations or practising discrimination in the workplace.

In April, Public Concern at Work, an independent charity that helped draw up the whistle blowers' law, took the government to judicial review. Despite the government's attempts to keep secret all details of applications to employment tribunals, it won a ruling in the High Court that they should be made public.

New Labour's twin obsessions of control and secrecy made a mockery of their claims to a commitment towards a culture of rights when, on July 26, without consultation and without any public announcement, they quietly introduced a statutory instrument to overturn the High Court's ruling. As a result, from next week, all the public will know is that an application has been lodged at an employment tribunal, the participants' names and addresses, and nothing else. The Department of Trade and Industry calls this "a small administrative detail".

This 'small administrative detail' has effectively destroyed the aim of the bill, which was to force companies to follow basic safety procedures, have some sort of rudimentary ethical policy and protect employees who raise valid concerns without having to resort to lawyers.

Apart from the total disregard for the principle of open justice, the government's actions have trampled on an individual's right to follow their moral compulsion to speak out. New Labour's enthusiasm for this bill has been almost impossible to detect, anyway. There was no public information campaign at all. If effective, the law would have meant that unscrupulous employers would have become more accountable for their actions. Now, New Labour hate to upset the bosses... Anyway, the High Court decision was overruled without consultation or any debate.

New Labour spout the rhetoric of openness and accountability, but the reality is they are doing everything in their power to increase secrecy for themselves and the bosses.

Workers' rights cannot be guaranteed through lawyers, the courts, or parliament. They can only be won and then defended by collective, working class action. Individual workers who see employers flouting basic rights in the workplace need to look to other ways of 'whistle blowing' to protect themselves.

sidelines

Lindo family

Delroy Lindo, his wife Sonia, and their children have been subjected to a 15-year campaign of police harassment (see DA15). This campaign has involved 17 arrests leading to 19 charges against the couple. On 17 occasions they have been tried and found innocent by the courts. Their latest acquittal came at the end of May this year. Barely three weeks later, Delroy was arrested again, this time for the crime of sucking his teeth in the presence of a police officer!

Shopping Asda

On 29th July people picketed supermarkets up & down the country, demanding 'cash not vouchers' for asylum seekers. Demonstrators sung and chanted, spoke and heard speakers, gave out leaflets, talked to shoppers and shop workers, handed in petitions to supermarket bosses, and generally made their feelings clear about the way supermarkets are now pocketing the change from refugees. Collections were also held for toys and other 'luxury' goods which refugees are banned from buying under the voucher scheme.

On Saturday 19th August, there was a solidarity action at Oakington Immigration Detention Centre in Cambridgeshire. Oakington is the UK's newest detention centre, run for profit by Group 4 in a former MOD barracks. Up to 400 men, women and children can be held there. Even babies as young as 8 months have been detained at Oakington, despite there being no baby clothes or toys. The action was part of 'Cambridge in August', a series of direct actions against multi-nationals involved in genetic engineering, environmental destruction, animal abuse, prisons, etc.

More action coming soon: *Further days of action against vouchers and in solidarity with refugees are already being planned. The next will probably have taken place before you read this (9th and 19th September) but more are planned (see p.18-20).*

Asylum actions

Both ASDA and Sainsbury's have been profiting from asylum-seekers' miseries, by participating in voucher schemes designed to stigmatise and hound them. They aren't going to get away with it lightly. Full story and contact details on pages 18-20.

sidelines

SAFE CRIMINALS

Since New Labour came to power, there have been two major rail disasters and nearly one thousand people have died in work-related incidents. Despite the 'tough on crime' rhetoric, New Labour has been most reluctant to make sure bosses are held accountable for the rising death toll. Finally, over 3 years after Jack Straw first promised to make changes to the law on corporate manslaughter, a consultation paper has appeared on the issue. Unfortunately, there is still no indication of when, if ever, any changes in the law will be brought in.

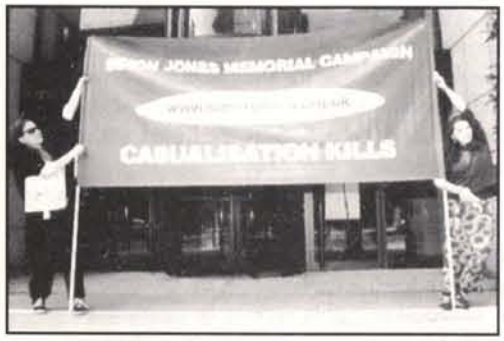
The government says they will extend current legal definitions to make it easier to convict managers and directors responsible for killing workers and members of the public.

However, responsibility for investigations and prosecutions will remain with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). There will be no requirement to prosecute, so deaths at work and even major disasters could result in no more than an HSE investigation. The HSE has a very poor record of investigating and prosecuting. Its track record suggests that whatever the new law says, it will continue to fail to take action against those ultimately responsible - the directors who put profits first and safety a very long way behind. Also (surprise, surprise), 'Crown Bodies' will be exempt from any new laws. Government departments and prisons will not be prosecuted, despite being major contributors to the corporate carnage.

In New Labour's defence, there are only so many hours in a day. Parliamentary time is already crammed with new laws to persecute refugees, further criminalise protest and activism, and crack down on black economy working class 'criminals'. It seems there is no time left to deal with the real criminals who are making a killing and getting away with it – New Labour's corporate friends.

CASUALISATION KILLS

The road was blocked - peacefully



The dock was closed and workers sent home on full pay

The Personnel Selection agency was occupied

1st September 2000 would have been Simon's 27th birthday and, as DA goes to press, the Campaign is organising a meeting at the steps of St Paul's Cathedral, London. For the latest and how to help, see www.simonjones.org.uk. Stickers, posters and a campaign video are available for a donation; cheques should be sent to Simon Jones Memorial Campaign, PO Box 2600, Brighton BN2 2DX. There is a public meeting in Manchester on October 31st hosted by Manchester SF – see p. 35 for details.

Simon Jones was killed in April 1998 as a casual worker at Shoreham dock. A student, who was forced to take a job after threats from the dole, was decapitated within hours of starting work at the docks. He had received no training, nor had the employment agency who hired him checked that the job was safe - as required by health and safety law.

Despite countless letters and protests, the Health and Safety Executive refused to bring charges against Euromin, the company Simon was working for when he was killed. As part of the campaign to try to get the HSE to act, a number of protests were organised. A road was occupied outside the HSE for three hours until the HSE agreed to meet the family. On the first anniversary of Simon's death, the docks where he was killed were occupied forcing the docks to close for a day. The employment agency Personnel Selection was occupied and a banner hung outside reading 'Murderers'. The protest raised media interest, and in a BBC interview on the campaign, the environment Minister M Meacher was forced to admit that the Government had not done enough to protect workers and that fines as little as £2,500 for cases involving death or serious injury are outrageous.

Last September two judges ordered the Crown Prosecution to reconsider their decisions not to prosecute Euromin or its manager for manslaughter. This was a historic victory - the first successful judicial review of a decision not to prosecute for manslaughter over a workplace death.

The families, friends and campaigners are awaiting the court case, but not passively. They remain determined not only to get justice for Simon but to raise the issue of casual labour and the disgusting record of the Health and Safety Executive, which only investigates 1 in 20 serious injuries at work, leaving some 48,000 cases uninvestigated last year. As the Simon Jones Memorial Campaign states, "this profit-before-people set up has to be challenged before more people like Simon get killed. That's what we're trying to do. That's what we want to do".

IN THE TROUGH

Cadbury's have apparently been using chocolate earmarked for pig food in their products. A long-standing contractor has been taking chocolate labelling 'unfit for human consumption' and using it in Cadbury's products, including Dairy Milk and Creme Eggs. A graphic example, if it were needed, of the conflict between the satisfaction of human needs and the market economy's overwhelming greed for profit.

Cadbury's haven't been doing too well recently. They were first humbled by the US brand giant Philip Morris in their failed bid for Nabisco. Then, a few days before the pig food chocolate exposé, Cadbury-Schweppes in Britain announced weak half-year UK sales. Revenue fell by £1 million to £456 million. The UK market represents 23% of their total business. It looks like the British sweet tooth no longer has a soft spot for Cadbury's products.

'Amazingly' however, things don't seem to have turned out too bad for Cadbury's bosses. They subsequently announced pre-tax profits of £730 million, with share earnings of 23.6p. Miracles? Not really, massive restructuring across the multinational meant that the workforce provided the profit by simply being slimmed down. Basic rule of capitalism - profit growth does not necessarily depend on sales growth. Passing off pig food as Dairy Milk and turning the screw are much less hassle.

58 DEAD? – NO, OVER 2000

The death of 58 passengers "Sans Papiers" could have been prevented with a humane and ethical immigration policy. Applying for asylum in the UK has deteriorated to the point where asylum seekers are left without basic human rights, forced into dispersal and detention, and discriminated against with vouchers. Political asylum has been so restricted by legislation that there is hardly any way of claiming political asylum in the UK.

People fleeing war are not considered to be genuine refugees - they are 'just' fleeing 'general violence'. Those fleeing state persecution (like China, with a recognised appalling human rights record, where these 58 people came from) have to overcome extensive pre-entry controls, and once they manage to get a visa or a false document to escape, they are invariably detained and refused asylum.

UK and European anti-immigration policy forces those who are persecuted or experiencing hardship into underground routes towards a better life. The European governments are to blame. The media simply speculated whether the 54 men and 4 women were "illegal immigrants". Their humanity was lost. They had no identity other than being "Sans Papiers" in the UK.

More than 2000 refugees and migrants have died in and around Europe since 1993 as a result of European refugee policies. Instead of finding a safe place and a better perspective for their life, people have drowned, suffocated, been beaten to death by racist attackers, gagged to death by policemen or committed suicide in dispair. These deaths can be put down to border militarisations, asylum laws, detention policies, deportations and carrier sanctions, summarised as "Fortress Europe".

Let Home Secretary Jack Straw know what you think;
Jack Straw MP 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT
Or fax him on : 020-7273-3965
(International +44-20-7273-3965)
Please fax copies of any letters to the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns (0807-055-4570).
A full list with all 2000 cases of deaths is available from the UNITED office, or you can download it from the UNITED website
http://www.united.non-profit.nl

sidelines

POLITICAL PARENTING

The Home Office is proposing to make it an offence to allow a child to watch any video containing sexually explicit material, of the 'R18' type, only available through licensed sex-shops. The general gist is that, if a parent leaves a video lying around, they are liable.

The Government wants to create a new crime, "failing to prevent a child from watching an R18 video", carrying a substantial fine or 6-month prison sentence. In view of their errant sons' recent behaviour, you might think Messrs Blair and Straw are aware of the parental difficulties of controlling the actions of teenagers.

Inevitably, like other preaching legislation, this will end up being a case of one law for the poor and none for the rich. It will not descend on Jack Straw if he fails to prevent his son dealing in cannabis again, nor his police chauffeur for driving at 103 miles an hour, after all, Jack told him to.

In July, Lena Summers became the first to face a parenting order. Apparently, her 14-year-old son, David, had truanted for all but 39 days of the last school year. Lena is a single parent, who starts work at 4.30am and consequently leaves the house hours before the schools open. She was sentenced to a 3-month course in parenting - perhaps Blair and Straw would benefit from one of these courses?

Increasingly, politicians are recognised hypocrites who do not keep their promises, unless it is an authoritarian, draconian or reactionary promise, that is. As the smell of bullshit becomes unbearable, the numbers of young people who bother turning out to vote continues to decline sharply. We have more sense. At the same time, the number of people getting involved in direct action continues to grow by leaps and bounds. Once again, we have more sense.

National Day of Action, Manchester, July 15th

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

Pride (London) protested against the commercial takeover of the annual Pride March on July 1st by London Mardi Gras. Needless to say, the gay press concentrated on the usual drag queens and muscle boys on and around the floats as part of their agenda to present Pride to their sponsors as a depoliticised spectacle.

The picnic in Hyde Park for those who didn't want to go to the Mardi Gras was far more enjoyable than going to a music festival and wondering if the people you're talking to are just after a shag. There was a sing-a-long to Eric Prestland's political songs, and it drew an audience, achieving real visibility for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgendered people enjoying being ourselves, rather than being hidden behind walls of adverts in Finsbury Park.

There was also a brief meeting to discuss future alternatives to Mardi Gras. Pride (London)'s profile was hampered by the reluctance of some of its directors to try to mobilise its membership for fear of actually being "hostile and confrontational" towards the Mardi Gras. The organisation looks likely to shed either those members who want to work with Mardi Gras, or those of us who think reclaiming Pride from business is a worthwhile objective to work towards.

That task was put into perspective by some of the political activity around Section 28 and fascist intimidation. Stonewall called a National Day of Action for 15th July in Manchester. Only 12-1500 people turned up, but it was a thoroughly enjoyable march.

On 29th July, a Pride March and "party" was held in Leicester for the first time. The march was called by Leicester Unity against Prejudice, after a planned commercial Mardi Gras was cancelled due to fascist threats. Actually, the threats from the miniscule local NF branch raised insurance and security costs for the commercial operation, making it unprofitable and leading to its cancellation.

Opposition came in the form of around 50 fascists from the NF and the BNP organising separate stunts. Anti-fascists, including a small contingent of SF and Class War members prepared to defend themselves from any attacks, but the organisers seemed as afraid of this as of the fascists.

The Anti-Nazi League, by contrast, seemed to think we should abandon the march and wave lollipops at the fascists. The SWP apparently needed to set up some false division in order to present themselves as leading the fight against fascism. The fact that about 500 people marched for diversity and against fascism counts as a victory, and we anarchists enjoyed the day out.

BIRMINGHAM ACTION AGAINST CAPITALISM

A PERSONAL ACCOUNT WRITTEN ON JUNE 5TH 2000.

For several weeks prior to the action on June 3rd, the local media had attempted to stir up an atmosphere of hostility towards it. So it was no surprise to see a major police operation involving 500 officers in and around the city centre.

Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, plus road blocks, stop and search and general intimidation was used to try and stop anyone getting to the meeting point. Outside the Central Library in Chamberlain Square, around 70 demonstrators were surrounded by 200 police officers blocking all exits. No sooner the Little Nora mini sound system kicked in than it was seized.

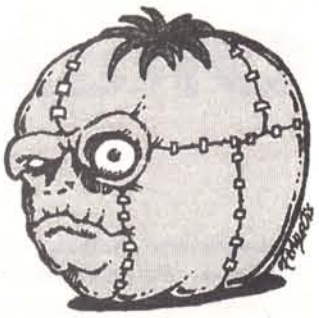
After two hours of harassment, protesters formed up behind the Stop Planet Inc Save Planet Earth banner and, shouting and whooping, headed towards the thick blue line. A quick move and 40 were out down a narrow exit and onto the highway. Now it was freedom and the chase was on. Moving fast, the protesters blockaded a main ringway and then steamed through McDonalds. With mega numbers of police closing in, it was off again to dance on another main road.

The demo had been going for 45mins and was now in the heart of the central shopping area and heading for the Pallasade shopping centre, GAP and another McDonalds. However, mobs of police were now moving in. Hundreds of shoppers looked on as the police caused chaos by jumping on every protester they could get their hands on.

Handcuffed and surrounded by police, the anti-capitalists were paraded along the street by the clearly-frustrated state lackeys. This gave us the opportunity to shout pro-eco and anti-corporate slogans to the massive crowd of onlookers. It was an uplifting experience and served us during our time in custody.

To justify the huge police operation, 22 arrests were made. What the day proved was that no matter how much power the state uses, a small *posse* of determined rebels can outwit, ridicule and beat the forces of repression. They fear us, that is why they spend vast amounts of money and resources to try and stop our legitimate right to protest against their corrupt political and capitalist system...

NAFF OFF NAFTA



THE GM FOOD FIGHT; ONE BATTLE IN WAR FOR CORPORATE DOMINANCE.

John Redwood has now publicly said that Britain should join the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), as an alternative to the European Union. The Eurosceptic Tory right has finally come out of the closet, made bold by recent remarks from a top aide of the Republican presidential candidate, George Bush. Further integration into the EU is, apparently, a threat to British independence. But it's OK, some of the Americans want us!

However, there are plenty of clear signals from the US government that NAFTA membership would hardly be on an equal basis. For a start, ask any other member. The US government is always a trade bully, even amongst its 'partners', and it is currently gearing itself up for a world trade war. The main tactic is not negotiation, but steamroller ultimatum.

The US government strongly objects to American food products being labelled as containing genetically modified products. They claim this amounts to unfair discrimination against US products. Unless the labels are dropped, they promise all-out war. Washington has already warned that it is considering making a complaint to the World Trade Organisation in Geneva, on the grounds that labelling is discriminatory against US goods, and is therefore a restraint on trade. They are to ask for sanctions against EU goods if GM labels are not removed. Hopefully, these blatant bully-boy tactics will outrage enough people to enable them to be resisted successfully.

BANANA CARDIGANS

It goes without saying that the majority of GM companies of any size are US-owned. These threats are not to be taken lightly. The UK government is already bracing itself for heavy job losses in the Scottish cashmere industry because of retaliation by the US government in the long-running dispute over EU banana imports. The US government claimed that the Caribbean producers in former colonies of the EU were getting preferential treatment.

The US government view is that GM labelling should not be required, because the products are the same to all intents and purposes as non-GM produce. Consequently, they claim it breaches free trade arrangements. They seek through economic muscle to deny us the right to know what we are eating. They wish to deny us the choice. One may expect this to silence the pro-NAFTA tendency in the Tory Party, who frequently claim the right of choice, free speech, etc. when it suits them. But alas, their infatuation with NAFTA may render them blind to all.

The GM debate is not just about consumption-related health. There is the issue of free speech and consumer choice. There is also the question of resistance to the US government's use of dirty tactics. There is the very serious prospect of GM releases into the natural environment, with unknown effects. Then, there is the main issue – domination of agriculture by GM corporates.

The GM labelling row is only one in a long series of trade disputes between the EU and US. These will continue, as the struggle for global dominance hots up. So far, Britain has escaped sanctions in the row over the use of hormones in beef. The British government officially supports the US government position (and therefore the idea of eating unlabelled hormone-laden beef) but it cannot opt out of the EU ban. As a result, the targeted wrath of the US government has fallen on mainland Europe.

Meanwhile, the EU has complained bitterly about the large subsidies the US government continues to make to US companies like Boeing, Ford, Exxon and Monsanto. The US government obviously doesn't see the problem and thinks this helps them provide perfectly fair competition.

MIS-LED, MIS-MANAGED

US farmers and agricultural producers have been badly hit by the banning and boycotting of foods containing GM ingredients. Many have made big losses. They were strongly encouraged to grow GM crops such as soya and maize by the US Government. The result is financial disaster for those who responded to the advice.

The US Food and Drug Administration, in its pronouncements, insists that only nutritional information should be given on labels. It insists that US products are pure and wholesome. The FDA recently announced; "This is getting extremely serious. We regard requiring GM labelling as economic fraud. Our view is that we would not have allowed these products on the market if they were not safe. They are the same as non-GM food, so they do not require a label. In fact, to label them is trade discrimination and therefore, wrong".

In Washington, Tom O'Connor, Director of Technical Services for the National Grain and Feed Association, said that the EU labelling system will "kill GM technology in Europe" and labelling "looks like a warning, like putting a skull and crossbones on the packet. A kiss of death in marketing terms". No doubt this dispute will escalate further, with allegations, threats and bargaining between the EU, the US and the WTO. The issue of GM labelling is only one battle in the wider war.

sidelines

OIL SLAVES

Premier Oil, a British company, is part of a consortium behind a £500 million project to put a gas pipeline through Burma. They have kept costs down and profits up - by using slave labour. Texaco, Premier's US partner, pulled out of the project due to Government pressure in 1997. It apparently stated that it could no longer work in Burma in the current political climate.

This April, the British Government took the unusual step of asking premier Oil to leave the project, but they refused. The pipeline runs through an area where the Karen people live. Some 30,000 Karen people have been killed and currently, 120,000 are refugees in camps, most of which are over the border in Thailand.

Texaco withdrew from the consortium under pressure. Now it is Premier's turn. Let them know what you think about modern slavery.

Premier Oil, 23 Lower Belgrave Street, London SW1W 0NR. Tel: (020) 7730 1111. Fax: (020) 7730 4696.

SOLIDARITY APPEAL

Under the recent Employment Relations Act, once 50% of the workforce join a union, the employer must recognise it. However, the response of Floplast in Bobbing, Kent has been to illegally sack 6 people. Since the new legislation came into force, employers in Britain have been employing law firms to get advice on union busting and intimidating workers. If Floplast get away with it, other bosses will follow suit. So, send support/solidarity and get action details;

Floplast Workers C/O GPMU Kent Branch, 155 London Rd, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 1PA Telephone: 01795 423 993 Fax: 01795 471 791 Email: dannym@gpmukent.demon.co.uk. Also, let Floplast Operations manager Derek Bartrip know what you think - Fax him on 01795 431 188.

ORGANSNATCHERS

The ultimate logic of capitalism is that to survive, you must find something to sell. Even if it is your body parts.

Mumbai (Bombay), India, is the black market organ capital of the world, where poverty-stricken peasants have sussed they can survive on one kidney and one eye. Worse still, wealthy, decrepit and immoral Middle Easterners and Westerners have also sussed out that there are people desperately poor enough to sell their bodies. Any taxi driver in Bombay could take you to clinics where the ops are available. The going rate is £30,000 for a kidney transplant, a little more for an eye. Livers and hearts are more difficult to come by because they involve hospital bribes to obtain a suitable fresh corpse. You are talking up to £100,000 for a heart, £50-70,000 for a liver.

Until 1994, India's kidney market was legal. Even now, a legal loophole permits non-relatives to "donate" organs provided the donation has been approved by a local medical committee. However, the surge in demand has outstripped any emerging transplant ethics. Today, local people talk of having to sell a kidney to raise money for daughters' wedding dowries and to pay off debts. When they do, many are back in debt within a year-minus a kidney. That's capitalism.

THE ULTIMATE TAKE-AWAY

China is also feeding the global organ frenzy. Human Rights Watch Asia and the Laogai Research Foundation have independently concluded that the Chinese authorities are harvesting kidneys, corneas, livers and hearts from executed prisoners. They go to well-connected Chinese or to patients from Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan, where they fetch 5-figure sums. Apparently, the full heart and lungs cost £80,000. A dodgy prison guard will 'Select' a prisoner, remove his organs, then execute him.

In 1998, two Chinese citizens were arrested for conspiring to sell human organs in New York. The organs are alleged to have come from 200 prisoners executed on Hainan Island. China has recently increased use of the death penalty to keep pace with demand. Now, alleged tax evasion or petty theft is deemed enough for the state to murder you legally.

And the trade in organs is not limited to Asia. In South Africa, organ thefts of corneas, heart valves, and other tissues from a police mortuary in Cape Town were sent to local and international medical units for research and transplants. The mortuary rarely obtained consent from the dead people's families. In Brazil, after minor surgery to remove an ovarian cyst, a woman was told by her doctor that one of her kidneys was missing. The surgeon who performed the operation claims the kidney had become embedded in the cyst and had to be removed, but other physicians think that's medically improbable. The woman suspects the hospital sold her kidney to someone who needed a transplant. Also in Brazil, transplant clinics practise "compensated gifting", where patients give unofficial presents to organ donors. These presents include cash gifts of $1000, houses in the country, etc. One doctor in Rio de Janeiro said, "obviously you have to suspect something when the patient is a wealthy Rio socialite and her donor is a poor, barefoot cousin from the country."

About £8,000 will get you a whole child in El Salvador, but they are just £3,000 in Honduras. In Guatemala City, taking corneas from corpses is regarded as a perk of the job for undertakers. An aid worker remarked; "Occasionally a child will turn up dead, with his organs missing, but more often than not the corpses aren't even found. Operations are done in Mexico".

Europe's organ trade capital is Italy. Until recently, a private clinic in Trieste was supplying organs from Bosnian prisoners of war; prisoners whose samples matched those required met an unfortunate end, as did the Spanish journalist who began to investigate the trade. In Rome, it is not unusual for corpses to turn up at the morgue minus their eyeballs. Of course, organ trading doesn't happen in the British health system. Er, well... in 1990, Dr Crockett was struck off for being involved in kidney trading with Turkish donors. Today, one trader in Southall, London, charges a £3,000 arrangement fee for "kidney tours" to India.

Any idea that selling organs for cash benefits the terminally ill or poor donors is a fallacy. Organ donors and the poor will always be second-class citizens in such deals. They generally receive little or no follow-up care, and have no insurance against their second organ failing. The logic of capitalism is such that those with the money - the organ buyers, are the ones who get the care. Indeed, the logic of capitalists is that organ trading is just the 'market at work'. It is the rest of us who recognise that it is an indication of a sick system at work.

The basis of this article is drawn from work by Organs Watch, a pressure group based in California.

Food Agenda 2000

Join the Food Revolution

Canada

In July, members of the Citizens' Voluntary Labelling Collective (CVLC) were confronted and harassed by plainclothes security agents at the (Loblaws-owned) IGA (not so) Independent supermarket in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island (PEI). After leaving the building, they were stopped by police. However, Loblaws did not want to press charges, as this would garner unwanted media attention about unlabelled genetically modified (GM) food.

Targeted GM products generally contained corn, canola, or soy. Some examples were infant formula, granola bars, and Kellogs Frosted Flakes and Corn Flakes. The labels read "WARNING: This product may contain genetically engineered material which has not been adequately tested and could be dangerous to your health."

CVLC PEI has continued their labelling campaign throughout the summer, and they will not be deterred by intimidation and scare tactics. An anonymous CVLC member explained; "People do not want to be lab rats in this unnecessary and unsafe experiment. Genetic engineering is an inherently unpredictable process, and these foods are only tested by the companies who create them." So citizens across the country and around the world are applying safety warnings in a growing movement to fill the role that government has abdicated. Labelling is on the rise. Concerned citizens will continue to act.

For more info, contact: cvlcpei@voluntarylabelling.com or visit http://www.voluntarylabelling.com (on the Website you'll find some very useful labelling tips and PDF files with lots of ready made labels to download!)

US

On July 31, anti-biotech direct actionists calling themselves the 'Dusty Desperadoes' destroyed five acres of genetically engineered canola at Monsanto facilities. A communiqué sent by the activists stated that "this site in Dusty, WA is only one minuscule part of Monsanto's biological imperialism. In Washington alone it has 96 current permits for the release of GE organisms. It has recently begun to expand its monopolies from chemicals to seeds to water, and the crisis of pollution and depletion of water resources is viewed by Monsanto as a business opportunity. According to Robert Farley of Monsanto, "What you are seeing is not just a consolidation of seed companies, it is really a consolidation of the entire food chain."

Since November 1998, there have been at least 37 reported anti-genetic direct actions in North America and the movement shows no signs of slowing down. In the last two weeks in July, Earth Liberation Front activists struck facilities in two different states. Also, direct actionists called 'Concerned Maine Citizens' cut trees at an experimental farm in Milo, Maine. At the same, time hundreds of activists protested the International Society for Animal Genetics, facing heavily armed police and state troopers in downtown Minneapolis. The movement maintains that biotechnology is completely unnecessary and is being developed at the expense of human and ecological health solely to increase the profits of large multinational corporations.

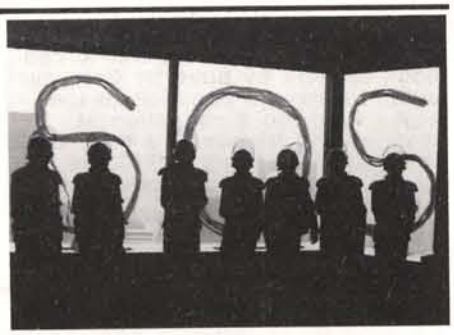
Korea

On July 1, 2000, at 4am, more than 3,000 special troopers of the police stormed the Lotte Hotel, downtown Seoul, to drag out some 1,000 striking workers.

The Lotte Hotel Workers Union went on strike on June 9 demanding 17% wage increase, change in employment status of temporary workers to permanent employees, 40 hour working week, and extension of retirement age. The Lotte Hotel took the spot light of the world media when it was used as the main press centre for the south-north Korea Summit between President Kim Dae Jung and

LØTTE

Chairperson Kim Jong Il. The striking union co-operated with the management by suspending the sit-in strike at the hotel and deploying staff to the press centre during the period of visit to north Korea by President Kim Dae Jung. More than 3,000 riot police stormed the second, thirty-sixth, and thirty-seventh floor of the Lotte Hotel, where striking workers were maintaining their sit-in action in the large ball rooms. Police sprayed and fired tear gas into the rooms where striking workers were sleeping. They beat the workers with their truncheons causing serious injury to some 70 workers.



Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, 5th Fl. Daeyoung Bld., 139 Youngdeungpo-2-ga, Youngdeungpo-ku Seoul 150-032 Korea Tel.: +82-2-2636-0165 Fax: +82-2-2635-1134 E-mail: inter@kctu.org Website: http://kctu.org

Ireland

Six workers at the Aldi supermarket in Parnell Street have been on strike since June 3rd. When the workers joined MANDATE (the union for shop and bar staff), management responded by refusing to talk to the union. They then sacked two union workers for "poor performance" (despite having offered one of them a management job only days before because his work was so good!) and suspended three others for refusing to carry out heavy duty cleaning, such as toilet cleaning, as well as being cashiers.

The workers joined the union because Aldi's claim to pay £7.00 per hour is a lie. To earn £7.00 you would have to meet an unachievable productivity target. Also, they were not happy with the way their hours were being recorded by management (i.e. they were not being paid for all their time at work).

Aldi recognises unions in Germany, Denmark and Britain. If they get away with smashing the union here, other bosses will try to copy them, and Aldi themselves will almost certainly try it on in other countries. Recently Aldi advertised seeking staff on a "self-employed" basis. This means no sick pay and no holiday pay. What you can do;

- Don't shop in Aldi until the strike has been settled.
- Tell Aldi what you think (Aldi, Carmanhall Rd, Sandyford Industrial Estate, Dublin 18, Ireland; Fax 00 353 1 294 5973)
- Send support messages to Aldi Support Group (Fax 00 353 1 677 2592) or Mandate (9 Cavendish Row 1, Dublin, Ireland; Fax 00 353 1 872 9581)
- If you are local, stop at the picket and give the strikers your support.

With just six people on strike we can make sure they are not forced back to work by poverty: Get your union to make a donation to the strike fund, do a collection at work/among friends/at a gig. Send to: Aldi Strike Fund, AIB Capel Street, Dublin 1; sort code 93-11-01, a/c no.01011059
Visit the Website; http://surf.to/anarchism or email wsm_ireland@geocities.com

Czech Republic

In August, yet another chapter of the monster trial against the group of 10 Czech anarchists in Zlin (to the East of the country) unfolded.

The so-called Zlin trial, a prolonged legal and political battle between the Czech state and the anarchist/antifascist movement, started in April 1998, when a group of local anarchists/antifascists violently repulsed the attack of 12 nazi-skinheads, members of the so-called "Patriotic Front", an extreme nationalist and fascist organisation, leaving one of the nazis heavily wounded. Police hastened to the scene, rounded up all known local anarchists and fabricated evidence for a case against them. As they put it: "a group of dangerous extremists attacked a group of innocent citizens". All were charged with "serious physical harm, committed by an organised group under ideological pretext" (Penal Law A7 222), which carries a possible 10 years prison sentence. One of the defendants is David Srott, age 22, metalworker, dedicated anarchist militant from Otrokovice and FSA-IWA member. He is a regular target of police persecution.

With sentences apparently imminent, David Srott's new lawyer (the previous one having resigned after deciding the case was hopelessly prejudiced and fabricated by the police) proved himself very able in defence. In reply, the State prosecutor announced two completely new witness reports (from local nazi-skinheads). The two new "witnesses", two years on, have apparently just remembered that they were present as bystanders at the incident and watched some people attacking a group of "normal guys".

The hearing was postponed to September 5th. Things are not looking good right now. However, the powerful combination of international anarchist protest and pressure and the activity of good defence counsels, paid for by CZ Anarchist Black Cross group (integral part of FSA-IWA), is telling, and provides a major obstacle to the plans of Czech State forces.

CZ Anarchist Black Cross is covering expenses for David Srott's legal defence, because as all ordinary anarchist workers, he cannot afford to do so. Costs of legal defence in this case, covered by CZ ABC, have climbed over US$2000. Previous appeals in DA were clearly not enough. Do what you have to do - send letters of protest to your local Czech consulate or embassy to;

- Demand charges are dropped against David Srott and his nine co-defendants
- Demand that the State prosecutor and judge cease to protect and cover the fascist political identity of "victims"
- Protest against the fact that this case is typical of the Czech police denying the existence of organised neonazis.

Send donations to;
CZ ABC Defence Fund,
Federation of Social Anarchists,
International Secretariat,
PO BOX 5, 15006 Praha 56,
Czech Republic.
Tel: 420-0604-773440
Email; intersec@atlas.cz

Colombia

On August 3rd, a national 24-hour strike to protest against austerity measures and record unemployment saw 700,000 workers walk off the job, with subsequent street battles with police, which brought riot gear and tanks to Colombia's capital, Bogota.

Indian and peasant protesters blockaded a highway through the central coffee-growing region and a high voltage power pylon was attacked in the Northwest industrial hub of Medellin. Police confronted workers in four cities around the country, firing water cannon and tear gas. One worker in the south-western city of Cali suffered a bullet wound. Oil workers, teachers, medical staff, telecommunications workers and government administrative workers were among those backing the strike.

It was the sixth strike against President Andres Pastrana's deeply unpopular economic policies, blamed by critics for causing the highest unemployment rate in Latin America. The strike also represented the first challenge for new Finance Minister Juan Manuel Santos, who has pledged a 2001 budget of "sweat and tears," including 5,000 public-sector job cuts and wage increases below the inflation rate.

DA16 International News Sources:
A-Infos News Service; http://www.ainfos.ca/
Genetix Alert; genetixalert@tao.ca
Ireland's Workers Solidarity Movement; http://surf.to/anarchism; wsm_ireland@geocities.com
DAMN (Direct Action Media Network); http://damn.tao.ca/
IWA (International Workers' Association); secretariado@iwa-ait.com; http://www.iwa-ait.com
Juventudes Libertarias (Libertarian Youths) in Bolivia; juventudes_libertarias@latinmail.com
CVLC (Citizens' Voluntary Labelling Collective); cvlcpei@voluntarylabelling.com; http://www.voluntarylabelling.com
KCTU (Korean Confed. of Trade Unions); inter@kctu.org; http://kctu.org

USA2

In August, police arrested over 100 people in front of the White House. They were marking 10 years of sanctions imposed on Iraq, by demonstrating and pouring fake blood on the sidewalk.

About 250 people had gathered in Lafayette Park across from the White House. Baghdad says some 1.5 million Iraqis may have died as a result of the sanctions and it rejects a U.N. resolution that would ease them if it allowed international inspectors to resume searching for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Some protesters crossed Pennsylvania Avenue to attach signs including 'Stop Sanctions Now!' and 'US has killed 1.7 million Iraqis for oil' to the black iron fence ringing the White House and to stand on the sidewalk in front of the mansion, violating a ban on such stationary protests.

South Africa

On July 9, 5000 people, many wearing "HIV Positive" T-shirts, gathered at the Durban City Hall to demand equitable access to HIV/AIDS treatment. The march preceded the opening of the 13th International AIDS Conference. Nuns, drag queens, traditional healers, doctors, teenage punks on skate boards, Pan-Africanists, gay activists, unionists, students and nurses had come from all over South Africa and from cities as far away as Mumbai, Paris, Guatemala City and Lagos to join the Global March for Access to HIV/AIDS Treatment.

President Thabo Mbeki has been dallying with "AIDS dissidents", who argue that HIV does not cause AIDS (see DA15), and has used their 'evidence' in an excuse to refuse AZT treatment to HIV+ pregnant women and rape survivors. The reality is that cuts are needed in government spending, so his African National Congress government can fund tax breaks for big business and the rich.

The march was organised by the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) - a rapidly growing organisation which draws much of its support from the trade union movement.

West Bank

In July, as US-sponsored peace negotiations were taking place between the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships, the Israeli command in the West Bank issued a military order demanding the evacuation of the village of Beit Iskarya, located 15 km outside the southern parts of Bethlehem.

A civil servant working at the Israeli Administration Office delivered the evacuation notification to a village resident, Ibrahim Jadallah. The civil servant requested Jadallah to inform all the residents of the village of the order, and added that the village should be evacuated within a month of the deliverance of the notification. He also warned that should the residents refrain from complying with the order, the Israeli Occupying Forces would remove them by force and destroy their houses, stating that the land on which the village is located was state land. It should be noted that there are currently 300 people living in the village, which was established hundreds of years ago.

Bolivia

In August, the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights in Bolivia (APDHB) presented a report documenting state terrorism during the period of martial law in April this year. In the barracks at Viacha alone, 55 *campesinos* were subjected to physical and psychological abuse. Those abducted by the military groups were deprived of food and clothing and kept in manacles for many days. They were also subjected to electric shocks or submerged, head down, in filthy toilet water. Their families were threatened with violence. The people who were being held were tortured andforced to confess to crimes and sign affidavits declaring that they had received good treatment.

Back in April, the government of president Banzer, former genocidal dictator of the 1970s, declared a state of siege designed to quell popular protests against the government's privatisation of public services. Bolivia is now the poorest and most corrupt country in South America. The government has even given its sustained and orchestrated campaign to suppress the rebellion a comical name - Correcaminos (Roadrunner). So far, they have arrested 44 unionists, murdered 5 demonstrators, and shot and wounded more than 35 people. Despite the arrests and martial law, the popular mobilisations have continued. Amid the hunger strikes and protests, the security forces have strewn the cities and highways with corpses, first dictating media coverage and then silencing the media for three days.

Contact: Juventudes Libertarias; juventudes_libertarias@latinmail.com

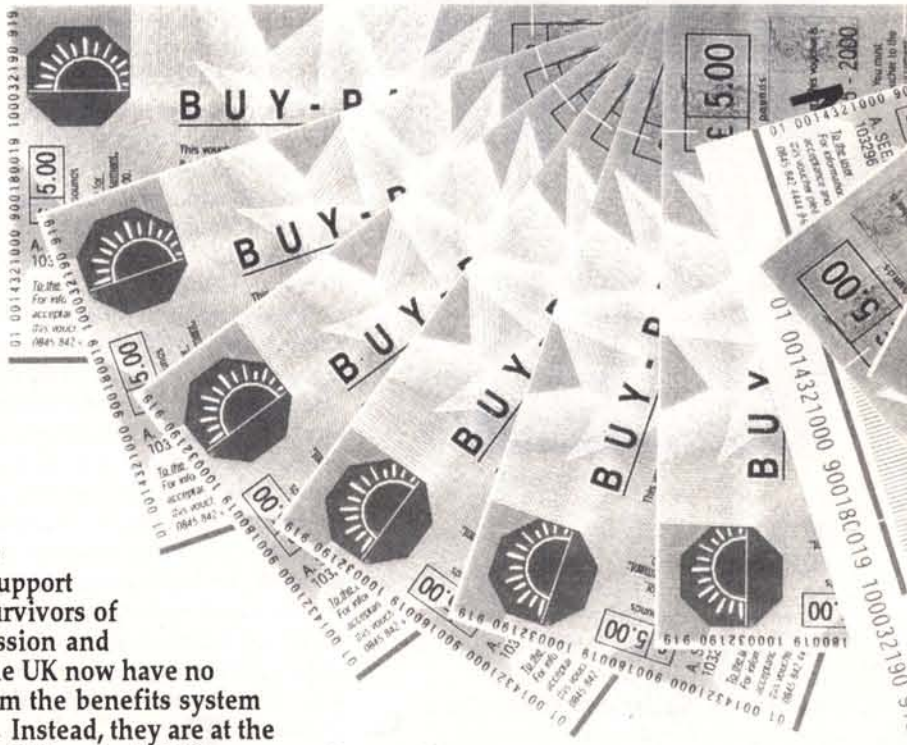
Mexico

On August 3rd, 30 members of the paramilitary group 'Paz y Justicia' attacked Progreso y Paraíso, a town in Yajalón, firing on the town's inhabitants, mostly people of the *Organización Proletaria "Emiliano Zapata"* (OPEZ — Proletarian Organization "Emiliano Zapata"). The men had gone to work, so the attack was directed at women and children, who fled for the mountains. The paramilitaries burned houses and stole televisions, radios, animals, corn, beans, depulping machines, and aspirating pumps.

The authorities are assisting and provoking confrontations in the communities in order to destabilize them and strengthen paramilitarization in the state.

'NASS'ty, brutish

Sodexho: from sandwiches to sadism



All Fools Day 2000 saw the start of a very sick joke - the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). Survivors of persecution, oppression and torture fleeing to the UK now have no right to support from the benefits system or local authorities. Instead, they are at the hands of the Home Office run NASS. Refugees are entitled only to support well below the poverty line and must live where they are sent, in sub-standard accommodation if they're lucky, in prison if they're not.

NASS features vouchers and 'no choice' dispersal. Asylum seekers receive financial support at just 70% of the (already pitiful) income support level, with only £10 a week in cash. The rest is in vouchers, possibly the most disgusting aspect of an all round disgusting system. By being forced to use these vouchers, refugees are stigmatised and demeaned, marked out as different every time they go shopping. Sainsburys in London humiliates them even further by forcing them to use a separate till for voucher holders.

As refugees, you have no choice about where you can shop or what you can buy with your vouchers. You can only use them at stores which have agreed to take part in the scheme - mainly big supermarkets & high street stores. You can't make your scant resources go further by shopping at local shops and markets. You can't buy the foods you need - if your local Tesco or Asda doesn't stock coriander or cassava, or whatever, tough. The government says what you can spend the vouchers on, so no 'luxuries' like cigarettes, newspapers or children's toys are allowed. And you can't get change. If you spend £4.50 but only have a £5.00 voucher, the supermarket pockets the difference.

The government admits that the voucher system will cost far more to administer than letting refugees claim benefits. Clearly they think it's a price well worth paying to punish them for being here. So who will benefit? Obviously the supermarkets, who now get state subsidies at the direct expense of refugees. And also Sodexho, the French multi-national awarded the government contract to administer the vouchers. They call the scheme 'Buy Pass' - presumably because by claiming asylum in Britain, refugees by-pass the right to be treated like normal human beings.

Sodexho refuse to say how much profit they expect to make from the scheme, but don't expect them to make a loss. They're not in this for humanitarian reasons. In their publicity material marketing 'Buy Pass' to supermarkets, they shamelessly bragged about the 'no change' clause. 'Don't miss this revenue making opportunity', they crowed. 'Vouchers will be the only method of buying essential living products. No change given, but you receive the full value of the voucher'. Not surprisingly, the supermarkets jumped at the chance to take part in this legalised thieving to further enrich their directors and shareholders.

As well as having to survive on vouchers (or

Asylum living allowances:

NASS voucher support rates are:

Person age 18-24	*£28.95*
Person over 25	*£36.54*
Couple	*£57.37*
Lone Parent	*£36.54*
Child under 16	*£26.60*
Child 16 or 17	*£31.75*

£10 worth of these amounts will be available in cash, for 'incidental expenses' and things excluded from the voucher scheme - like travel costs, phone calls, letters home, school trips, children's toys, newspapers, culturally appropriate food, etc...

Can you spare 10p, mate?

...the average cost to the 'taxpayer' of supporting asylum seekers is ten pence a week per head of population.

& short-changed

Sodexho: Buy-passing humanity

what's left after the supermarkets have got theirs), refugees are subjected to arbitrary 'no choice' dispersal around the country. They are separated from their communities, their families and friends, from cultural and linguistic support. Without good quality legal advice, it's almost impossible to win an asylum claim. Without decent interpreters, it's impossible to access health care, support and advice services - just about anything you need to survive. But most specialist legal help and interpreting is concentrated in London & the South East - the areas refugees are being 'dispersed' away from.

Once they have been 'dispersed', many refugees are housed in 'hard to let' properties, in council houses no one else wants. Others are exploited by private landlords, dumped in flats and houses unfit for human habitation. They may be many miles from others from their own ethnic, cultural or linguistic communities. Lack of cash makes it impossible for them to keep in touch with family, friends and support.

And increasing numbers of refugees, and others deemed 'illegal', are being interned in detention centres and prisons. Already over 11,000 people a year are held as immigration prisoners in the UK. Most of these are asylum seekers. They are held without charge, without trial and without time limit. With the recent opening of Oakington Barracks as a detention centre, even refugee children will be imprisoned.

The government is determined to be seen to be tough on refugees and migrants by locking them up in increasing numbers.

As privatisation of prisons is central to the government's 'law and order' agenda, all new prisons, including those for immigration prisoners, will be built and run by private companies. One of the main players in the prisons 'market' is UK Detention Services (UKDS). They're relative new comers, so you may not have heard of them. But you may recognise one of their main shareholders - Sodexho.

Once upon a time, Sodexho were just a catering company. Then they decided to expand, seeking new opportunities and profits from globalisation and privatisation, what they call the 'outsourcing market'. They look forward to 'a sustained focus on cost cutting ... to remain competitive in the face of globalisation'. Sodexho's approach can be seen in their American operations. In 1998, they bought a US company called Marriott. Marriott's employees were not allowed to join a union. They were banned from discussing their working conditions with outsiders, or even with colleagues, until the US Labour Relations Board condemned this suppression of free speech. Last year, they ran strike breaking operations in New England Hospitals.

Sodexho have also seen the great 'revenue making opportunities' in prisons. In 1994 they joined up with one of America's biggest prison businesses, Corrections Corporation of America (CCA). CCA and Sodexho own half each of UKDS, which runs prisons at Redditch and Salford (scene of recent rioting) and has a

(cont'd overleaf...)

SODEXHO WAS ONCE JUST A CATERING COMPANY... LAST YEAR, THEY RAN STRIKE-BREAKING OPERATIONS IN NEW ENGLAND HOSPITALS... THEN THEY SAW THE 'REVENUE MAKING OPPORTUNITIES' IN PRISONS... NOW, THE GOVERNMENT HAS AWARDED THEM THE CONTRACT TO ADMINISTER ASYLUM SEEKERS VOUCHERS

(...cont'd from previous page)

contract to transport prisoners. CCA has been accused of abusive treatment of prisoners, and of providing inadequate health care. Last year, one of its US prisons was investigated over allegations that guards were involved in drug smuggling, sexual misconduct and brutality. CCA is so proud of the profits it makes from prisoners that it posts its daily share price index on the gates of its prisons.

Because being 'firmer' on migrants means incarcerating as many of them as possible, the number of immigration prisoners in Britain is set to at least treble over the next few years. More & more people will be deemed 'illegal' and detained under immigration laws. Just asking for asylum will be enough for you to be jailed indefinitely. So more & more detention centres will be needed and, when the next lot of fat contracts to build them are up for grabs, don't be surprised if Sodexho, in the guise of UKDS, is at the front of the queue looking for more ways to profit from refugees.

Politicians and bosses enjoy a cosy relationship, hand in hand to exploit migrants and refugees. Supermarkets profit from vouchers, slum landlords from 'dispersal', security companies from detention centres. Many are major multi-nationals, keen exponents of globalisation. They want to move their profits freely around the world, but don't want to see people do the same. For them, people are another commodity, to be bought, sold and exploited as necessary.

By exploiting migrant workers, legal and 'illegal', they can 'drive down costs', keep their business lean & keen. In fact, 'illegals' are often preferred, whatever politicians may say in public. What business wants is a 'flexible' workforce, and who's more flexible than the worker who knows that if they don't do what they're told, if they demand better wages or try to organise in their workplace, the boss will be on the phone to Immigration? Bosses increase their profits by exploiting this to divide and rule, to drive wages and conditions down and profits up. When the Immigration Service come round to check and carry out their raids, following tip-offs or conveniently timed for after harvest or when the order is filled, the 'illegals' get rounded up and booted out. Bosses are never prosecuted.

What's next? ID cards are never far off the agenda for the parties of 'law and order'. The increasing climate of internal immigration controls (at work, at the benefits office, even at the hospital) gives them a great excuse. Well, obviously, it would be easier on the decent, law abiding immigrants if they could simply prove their status when asked, instead of getting constant hassle because they look foreign, speak with a funny accent or have a strange name.

And to get back to where we started, with vouchers; after asylum seekers, who's next? It's a constant irritation to governments that the unemployed can afford luxuries like running a car or going down the pub. Vouchers instead of cash for them, too, would be an ideal solution. The deserving poor should be grateful to get state hand-outs, and to be told what to spend it on. And profits are there to be had, especially for supermarkets and big business.

If you think this is pie-in-the-sky big brother paranoia, think again. Sodexho have recently secured a contract from the Belgian government to run a voucher scheme for students and the unemployed. First they came for the asylum seekers...

Anti-NASS actions:

- *protests outside supermarkets taking part in the voucher scheme*
- *social events welcoming refugees to local communities*
- *campaigns to close down immigration detention centres*
- *rallies at airports to welcome refugees*
- *boarding & disrupting flights to stop removals*
- *pickets at immigration appeal courts*
- *custard-pieing Widdecombe*
- *campaigns to support individuals and families facing deportation*

Want to Get Active?

- *to get involved in the resistance to immigration controls, contact your* ***local SF group*** *(see p.34)*
- *for info. on action against immigration controls, local anti-deportation campaigns, and campaigns against detention centres, contact the* ***National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns****: www.ncadc.demon.co.uk or phone 0171 701 5197*
- *for information on opposition to prisons, contact* ***CAGE:*** *www.veggies.org.uk/cage or phone 07931 401 963*
- *for more information on detention centres & prison building, visit the* ***Corporate Watch*** *site: www.corporatewatch.org*

Immigration detention centres with a reputation include:

- **Oakington 'Reception' Centre** (near Cambridge) - a former army barracks recently re-opened to hold up to 400 people, including children. Run by **Group 4.** Cases will be 'fast tracked', with the aim of removing asylum seekers as quickly as possible. The government denies it is a detention centre, but refugees sent to Oakington will be arrested and detained if they leave without permission.
- **Harmondsworth Detention Centre** - on 24th January this year, a Lithuanian asylum seeker hanged himself at Harmondsworth. In a 12-month period, in addition to this tragic death, at least 10 detainees have been seriously injured. No disciplinary action has been taken against staff.
- **Campsfield House** (near Oxford) - run by **Group 4**, holds around 200 people, most of whom are refugees. The government says it's a 'secure hostel', but the 20 ft razor wire fence makes clear it's really a prison.
- **Rochester Prison** - condemned as a 'disgrace' and guilty of 'institutional neglect' by the Chief Inspector of prisons. Holds asylum seekers (around 50% of the inmates), 'illegal' immigrants and young offenders.
- **Lindholme Prison** (near Doncaster) - recently split into two units with one unit to hold up to 110 immigration prisoners.
- **Manchester Detention Centre** - a contract to build a new immigration detention centre in Manchester has been awarded to **Premier Prison Services** (PPS), who also have the contract to transport detained asylum seekers around the country. PPS is part owned by American prison profiteers **Wackenhut**.

Miscarriage or Travesty?

Miscarriages of justice - There is NO Defence

The decision by the Police Federation to force off the Internet the Portia Trust site, which deals with miscarriages of justice, will concern any organisation which gets its message out through the web.

The web page concerned the case of Eddie Gilfoyle, who was accused of killing his wife in 1992 and sentenced to 17 years. The page named a Merseyside policeman, and thereby incurred the wrath of 'the Fed'. The web site providers were given the choice of pulling the site or going to court. Being a small outfit of twenty people, court would mean bankruptcy. There was nothing on the site which has not been covered already in newspapers and in the'Trial and Error' documentary. However, the British legal system is such that a fair trial could not be counted on – the risks were too great, so the site was pulled.

By way of example, the subsequent release of the M25 three, jailed for life at the Old Bailey in 1990 for a series of attacks and robberies around the London motorway, indicates the state agenda. The defendants, Raphael Rowe, Michael Davis and Randolph Johnson, were set free after their original trial was ruled unfair. However, the judge's remark that this was not a pardon left a shadow of guilt over the three men, which was seized upon by the tabloid press. As usual, the ensuing column inches missed the main point, and overlooked the facts that the main prosecution witness was a paid police informer, and that other witnesses described two white men and one black man as the assailants, whereas all of the convicted men were black.

It is not new for the state to rely on a whispering campaign against those who have been wrongly convicted and then pardoned. In 1949, George Kelly was hanged for a double murder at the 'Cameo' cinema in Liverpool. Subsequent inquiries proved Kelly's innocence, and two books on the case and a Radio 4 programme clearly showed the identity of the real murderer. The police simply spread the story that Kelly was a petty thief and dealer in black market goods. While no-one can realistically claim Kelly was the murderer any more, the "Ah, yes, but..." syndrome still hangs over the case.

In 1953, Derek Bentley was hanged for killing a policeman during a warehouse robbery in Croydon. Bentley was arrested despite not having the gun, and was convicted on an alleged remark made to his associate, Christopher Craig. The 19-year-old Bentley, who had the IQ of an 11-year-old, was sentenced to death, and the Tory Home Secretary, David Maxwell-Fyfe refused to commute his sentence to life. Every subsequent Tory Home Secretary refused to grant a posthumous pardon. The nearest the Bentley family came was when Kenneth Clarke said Derek should not have hanged, but went on to tell the assembled press that he should not have been on the roof of the warehouse. The implication that he was a 'bad sort' was thus carried on into a fifth decade.

Throughout the '80s and '90s, miscarriages of justice came to light at an alarming rate. The Maguire Seven, The Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six were all found to have been fitted-up on terrorist charges. The whispering campaign reached virtual shouting level as stories went around that they must have been up to something. On a television programme shown on the evening of the release of the Bridgewater Four, a senior policeman accused Gerry Conlon of belonging to 'certain organisations'. Gerry was quick to tell the officer to provide evidence or he would face legal action. Fifty years on and the "Ah, yes, but..." syndrome is alive and well.

The remarks of the judge in releasing the M25 Three may keep the "Ah, yes, but..." brigade happy, and it can be fairly safely assumed that subsequent victims of miscarriages of justice which come before the appeals court and win their freedom will be tainted with similar remarks. Meanwhile, the Police Federation can be relied upon to oppose freedom of expression whenever they can, to keep their blunders under wraps. Between the Fed and the Bench, there will be plenty of Law and Order, but what about justice? "Ah, yes, but..."

Justice for Mark Barnsley

For most people, Thursday 8th of June 2000 was just another day. For wrongfully imprisoned Sheffield man Mark Barnsley, and the ever-growing number of people who support his struggle for justice, it has special significance; it marked the 6th anniversary of what has become known as 'The Pomona Incident' (see below, plus review on p. 30).

As in previous years, on June 8th, Marks' supporters highlighted this gross miscarriage of justice and the campaign to get Mark's conviction overturned and his name cleared. In Sheffield, the day started off with a lively picket outside Sheffield Crown Court to protest the farce of a trial which Mark received there, and the fact that the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) are STILL illegally refusing to hand over vital evidence to Mark and his solicitor, after all these years. The offices of the Sheffield Star were picketed next, in protest at the downright lies and distortion which this gutter rag have printed about the case.

Abroad, in countries such as Sweden and Ireland, supporters' activities to highlight Mark's situation took the form of leafleting, protests to British Embassies and press releases to British media. In Malta, for example, supporters handed out leaflets about Mark's case at the City Gate of Valletta (Malta's Capital City). The activity prominently featuring on the front page of the daily 'Malta Independent' newspaper and also featuring in "L-Orizzont", the daily newspaper of the General Workers' Union, Malta's largest trade-union. Previously, 100s of postcards signed by students and academic staff were sent from Malta and many more from concerned people across the world to British Home Secretary Jack Straw, urging him to investigate the illegal withholding of evidence by the CPS, a crucial element in Mark's case. Mark is now into his seventh year of wrongful imprisonment. The myth that Britain's legal

system is the 'fairest in the world' is certainly wearing very thin.

On July 20th 2000, Mark Barnsley was transferred from HMP Woodhill. He is now at HMP Parkhurst on the Isle of Wight. This, the 4th in a series of punishment transfers this year, is clearly an attempt to further isolate Mark from his family, supporters and solicitor. Mark's solicitor has been trying to get him moved to a prison where he would be closer to his family and friends in the North of England. The Prison Service obviously have other plans for him.

The Justice for Mark Barnsley Campaign is demanding that Mark is relocated immediately to a prison in the North of England.

Your help is needed. For further information, to get involved in actions, letter writing campaigns, etc., please contact: Justice for Mark Barnsley - c/o 145-9 Cardigan Road, Leeds LS6 1LJ. Justice for Mark Barnsley (Ireland) - PO Box 1290, Belfast BT12 7BW. Tel: 07944 522001 E-mail: barnsleycampaign@hotmail.com Mark's case on the web: www.appleonline.net/justiceuk/eddie/mark.html www.openlyclassist.org.uk/ www.veggies.org.uk/cage www.access.lowtech.org/freepeople/mark.html Write to Mark; Mark Barnsley- WA2897, HMP Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 5NX, UK. He replies to all letters he receives. If you've written to him and not got a reply, please inform the campaign.

On June 22nd, at 8:49pm, Shaka Sankofa became the 135th person to be executed under Texas Governor and presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush Jr. He was handcuffed to a gurney and forced to an execution he resisted on the grounds of innocence.

Another midsummer murder

Who was Shaka Sankofa & why did the US State kill him?

Shaka's story is the growing norm for youth within the US urban centre. Born poor, he grew up with a mother suffering from mental illness and a debilitated alcoholic father. He dropped out of school illiterate, and became a petty thief to support himself. At times he was probably violent, as petty thieves often need to be to remain alive. In 1981, he was charged with the murder of Bobby Lambert, a known drug runner and a grass aiding an investigation into other drug runners in the Texas area. Bobby Lambert was murdered in full view outside a supermarket, with US$6000 on his person.

Shaka (aka Gary Graham - he changed his name to Shaka after the African leader Shaka Zulu), had already been arrested for a crime spree of robberies and alleged rape (the rape has never been proven). While in jail, he was arraigned for Bobby Lambert's murder and identified by one eye witness, who was in a car at night forty feet away from the murderer. Six other eye witnesses claimed he was not the gunman and described a man physically different from Shaka. Four people passed polygraph tests claiming Shaka was with them at the time of the murder. The lone woman's testimony is the only evidence for conviction. Shaka, an illiterate 17-year-old, left the trial to his lawyer, who handled the case incompetently, not even bothering to interview the six eyewitnesses that testified on police reports that Shaka was not the man.

It is a violation of international law to execute someone for a crime they did as a minor. But international law has never stopped the US State before. So as a young man, Shaka was put on Texas' Death Row, renowned for its physical and mental abuse by prison officials. Here, he took up self-education, learned to read Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr. and Huey P.

Shaka's final words

"I would like to say that I did not kill Bobby Lambert. That I am an innocent black man that is being murdered. This is a lynching that is happening in America tonight. There's overwhelming and compelling evidence of my defense that has never been heard in any court of America. What is happening here is an outrage for any civilized country to anybody anywhere to look at what's happening here is wrong.

I thank all of the people that have rallied to my cause. They've been standing in support of me. I say to Mr. Lambert's family, I did not kill Bobby Lambert. You are pursuing the execution of an innocent man.

I want to express my sincere thanks to all of y'all. We must continue to move forward and do everything we can to outlaw legal lynching in America.

We must continue to stay strong all around the world, and people must come together to stop the systematic killing of poor and innocent black people. We must continue to stand together in unity, and to demand a moratorium on all executions. We must not let this murder lynching be forgotten tonight, my brothers. We must take it to the nation. We must keep our faith. We must go forward. We recognize that many leaders have died. Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr and others who stood up for what was right. They stood up for what was just. We must, you must, brothers, that's why I have called you today. You must carry on that condition.

What is here is just a lynching that is taking place. But they're going to keep on lynching us for the next 100 years, if you do not carry on that tradition, and that period of resistance. We will prevail. We may loose this battle, but we will win the war. This death, this lynching will he avenged. It will be avenged, it must be avenged. The people must avenge this murder. So my brothers, all of y'all stay strong, continue to move forward.

Know that I love all of you. I love the people. I love all of you for your blessing, strength, for your courage, for your dignity, the way you have come here tonight, and the way you have protested and kept this nation together. Keep moving forward, my brothers. Slavery couldn't stop us. The lynching couldn't stop us in the south. This lynching will not stop us tonight. We will go forward. Our destiny in this country is freedom and liberation. We will gain our freedom and liberation by any means necessary. By any means necessary, we keep marching forward.

I love you, Mr. Jackson. Bianca, make sure that the state does not get my body. Make sure that we get my name as Shaka Sankofa. My name is not Gary Graham. Make sure that it is properly presented on my grave. Shaka Sankofa.

I died fighting for what I believe in. I died fighting for what was just and what was right. I did not kill Bobby Lambert, and the truth is going to come out. It will be brought out.

I want you to take this thing off into international court. Mr. Robert Mohammed and all y'all. I want you, I want to get my family and take this down to international court and file a lawsuit. Get all the video tapes of all the beatings. They have beat me up in the back. They have beat me up at the unit over there. Get all the video tapes supporting that lawsuit. And make the public exposed to the genocide and this brutal world, and let the world see what is really happening here behind closed doors.

Article reprinted and adapted from Onward, PO Box 2671, Gainesville FL 32602-2671, USA. See also; www.saveshaka.0-dec.com

Newton, and subsequently became a political leader and spokesman fighting for prison reform. The reaction of the prison system was considerable effort to speed up his execution and a refusal to review new-found evidence proving Shaka's innocence. Every time he went before a court, the door was slammed in Shaka's face on technicalities. As his fight for freedom gained attention, Bush endorsed a misinformation campaign claiming he was a rapist/murderer.

Bush is known for killing more people than any other governor in history. Shaka declared his innocence from age 17 until death. He admitted his robberies and during his years on death row he wrote letters as a man to the people he'd robbed apologising for what he had done. Ricky Jason visited Shaka after he had been transferred to 'Phase 2', the section where inmates wait to die. While in the prison bathroom, he overheard two guards laughing about how 'Gary' had no more legal appeals, and the words "Now we can execute that Nigger". Shaka wanted to know how Ricky got in, saying they had put him on restriction so only a lawyer, minister or media person could see him. He went on to recount how on the day the execution date was set, guards came to his cell with their heads covered with hoods to conceal their identity. Shaka struggled and continually proclaimed his innocence as he was tear gassed twice, beaten and dragged to Phase 2, where he passed out. The guards took everything from him; his radio, his typewriter, even his underwear. After the visit, Ricky said: *"[Shaka] was covered in filth with his shirt ripped, looking as though he had been wallowing on the ground. He had a huge knot over his eyebrow and was shaking like a leaf, stuttering, and asking for food"*.

Let the world see the barbarity and injustice of what is really happening here.
You must get those video tapes. You must make it exposed, this injustice, to the world. You must continue to demand a moratorium on all executions. We must move forward, Minister Robert Mohammed.
Ashanti Chimurenga, I love you for standing with me, my sister. You are a strong warrior queen. You will continue to be strong in everything that you do. Believe in yourself, you must hold your head up, in the spirit of Winnie Mandela, in the spirit of Nelson Mandela. Y'all must move forward. We will stop this lynching.
Reverend Al Sharpton. I love you, too, my brother. Bianca Jagger, I love all of you. Y'all make sure that we continue to stand together. Reverend Jesse Jackson, know that this murder, this lynching will not be forgotten. I love you, too, my brother.
This is genocide in America. This is what happens to black men when they stand up and protest for what is right and just. We refuse to compromise, we refuse to surrender the dignity for what we know is right. But we will move on, we have been strong in the past. We will continue to be strong as a people. You can kill a revolutionary, but you cannot stop the revolution. The revolution will go on. The people will carry the revolution on. You are the people that must carry that revolution on, in order to liberate our children from this genocide and for what is happening here in America tonight. What has happened for the last 100 or so years in America. This is part of the genocide, this is part of the African *(unintelligible)* that we as black people have endured in America. But we shall overcome, we will continue with this. We will continue, we will gain our freedom and liberation, by any means necessary. Stay strong. They cannot kill us. We will move forward. To my sons, to my daughters, all of you. I love all of you. You have been wonderful. Keep your heads up. Keep moving forward. Keep united. Maintain the love and unity in the community. And know that victory is assured. Victory for the people will be assured.
We will gain our freedom and liberation in this country. We will gain it and we will do it by any means necessary. We will keep marching. March on black people. Keep your heads high. March on. All y'all leaders. March on. Take your message to the people. Preach the moratorium for all executions. We're gonna stop, we are going to end the death penalty in this country. We're going to end it all across this world. Push forward people. And know that what y'all are doing is right. What y'all are doing is just.
This is nothing more that pure and simple murder. This is what is happening, my brothers. Nothing less. They know I'm innocent. But they cannot acknowledge my innocence, because to do so would be to publicly admit their guilt. This is something these racist people will never do. We must remember brothers, this is what we're faced with. You must take this endeavor forward. You must stay strong. You must continue to hold your heads up, and to be there.
And I love you, too, my brother. All of you who are standing with me in solidarity. We will prevail. We will keep marching. Keep marching black people, black power. Keep marching black people, black power. Keep marching black people. Keep marching black people. They are killing me tonight. They are murdering me tonight..."

On June 22nd, Shaka refused to order a last meal. He gave a final statement asking his supporters to push on regardless of his condition and kept saying, "They are killing an innocent man tonight". Beaten and bruised, it still took 5 men to pin him down, whereupon he was handcuffed to the gurney so he couldn't resist. He died in the middle of his statement, as the lethal injection was made. The major news programs were live outside along with hundreds of Shaka supporters and a few Bush supporters (mostly Ku Klux Klan members). George W. Bush Jr. made a public statement saying he felt justice was being done.

Some are Less Equal than Others

Getting personal: gay politics in Britain after the Clause 28 debacle

Three years ago, doubts about Labour's commitment to actually passing any gay equality legislation were buried under relief at the defeat of the hated, homophobic Tories. However, the only measure that has actually been passed is the long-awaited reduction of the Age of Consent for sex between men to 16, bringing it into line with boy-girl and girl-girl sex. Why has there been no real pressure on Labour to do more?

There are two national gay political groups - lobbyists Stonewall and "direct action group" Outrage. The acid test of their politics is their attitude towards the government's attempts to buy off opposition to law reform with concessions.

Stonewall has backed the government's "abuse of trust" measure in the Age of Consent Bill, which seeks to criminalise consensual sexual contact between people in positions of responsibility, such as teachers, and those in their care. It also welcomed the recent attempt by Education Secretary David Blunkett to buy off opposition to the Repeal of Section 28 by imposing the promotion of "marriage and stable relationships" on schools, although expressed disappointment at some of the wording. The concessions, based on the "predatory older homosexual" and "gay recruitment" myths, failed to buy off the bigots led by Janet Young in the House of Lords. However, their main objective was to prevent defections by Labour's own bigots, two of whom, Ann Taylor and David Blunkett, hold Cabinet rank.

The failure of the government to repeal Section 28 means that the statutory guidelines for sex education are on ice. However, the proposed guidelines state that "there should be no direct promotion of sexual orientation", which is rich since marriage is an exclusively heterosexual orientation. Stonewall might object to the proposed wording, but they are in favour of the compromises, which hands the initiative over to "family values" supporters like Blunkett and Blair.

Lesbian and gay equality is a paradox, based on the needs of a privileged minority of homosexuals - affluent white men

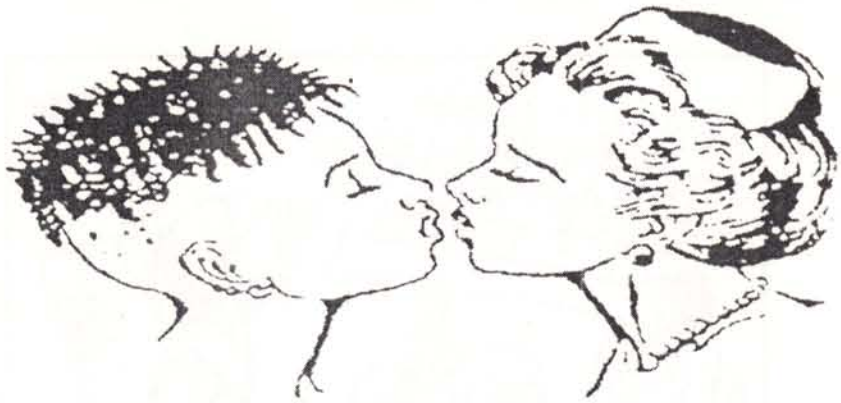
Outrage has remained relatively silent on these issues, concentrating its anger against the bigots in the Lords. Its *de facto* figurehead, Peter Tatchell, has pointed out the obvious - that despite its radical image, gathered from Gay-Liberation-Front-style "zaps", its political agenda is similar to Stonewall's. The differences are in style, not substance - so much for "direct action"! It should be pointed out here that Peter Tatchell left Outrage and stood as an "independent, left and green" candidate for the London Assembly in May 2000. His campaign was based at Sound (formerly Sound Republic), a Soho club owned by Kelvin Sollis (chairman of Chronos Publishing), Chris Graham-Bell (chairman of Millivres-Prowler), and John Miskelly (chairman of Stonewall). Around the time he announced his intention to stand, the Pink Paper (owned by Chronos) dropped its regular attacks on him and Outrage. He only got 1.5% of the vote, but is rumoured to be hoping for a job as policy adviser/ spokesperson on lesbian and gay issues from Ken Livingstone, in the same way as Lee Jasper is for black issues. Zaps around Clause 28 have been carried out against the Daily Mail newspaper and Stagecoach, owned by Brian Souter, leader of the 'Keep the Clause' campaign in Scotland. However, Outrage has not translated anger into action against the government. To some extent, this is due to Labour's clever dissipation of pressure for change by addressing the issues and drafting some legislation, then staggering its introduction and blaming the House of Lords for its defeat. More significant, however, is the bankruptcy of gay politics.

The Equality agenda is that all discriminatory laws should be repealed, all benefits accruing to heterosexual relationships should be extended to same-sex couples, discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation should be outlawed, and there should be a crackdown on homophobic crime. All of which seems reasonable enough, but ignores the fact that we do not live in an otherwise equal society. Lesbian and gay equality is a paradox, based on the needs of a privileged minority of homosexuals - affluent white men. Our oppression is seen as uncomplicated and the result of irrational prejudice, not part of complex power relations. "Equality" is based on the assumption of access to privacy and to legal redress, of being treated fairly at work, of not being in a social group otherwise targeted by the police for harassment and criminalisation.

Equality does not address class differences in discrimination - the more power and wealth you have, the less you face, and the more you can do about it. It does not address "mainstream" issues like the plight of homeless young people, among whom queer youth are disproportionately represented; nor does it address multiple discrimination, such as that faced by those who are also female, black, or disabled.

Stonewall is bankrolled by the great and good, so it is always going to prioritise the disadvantages of the privileged, and to adopt political positions and strategies which pose no threat to the status quo which delivers their privileges. The differing and more pressing needs of the working class majority, and the more drastic measures necessary to meet them, are not on the agenda. Identity-based politics inevitably reduces its agenda to the lowest common denominator.

Identity politics also has the weakness that it has to identify and restrict who can belong to the group it purports to represent. This leads many lesbians and gay men to react to propaganda that they can (and by implication should) become heterosexual by turning against those in the community who appear to support



this assertion. People who identify as bisexual or have had bisexual relationships are often viewed with distrust, or excluded from "community" spaces. One example of this is the exclusion of bisexual members from UNISON's self-organised lesbian and gay group. Groups of people – heterosexual or bisexual people, transsexuals, men – are regarded as problems in gay identity politics. The solution to problems defined in this way is exclusion, and denial that such behaviour can exist within the community.

While the lesbian and gay community might officially endorse diversity, and be best served by fighting for justice, the reality is inadequate politics based on self-interest and conformism. A more inclusive identity politics, supplemented by alliances with feminist, black and ethnic minority and disabled people's campaigns is no solution. This might broaden the scope of the politics but it would not change its basis.

Identity-based politics is best at making people visible in ways that they are not in mainstream politics, allowing issues to be raised and stereotypes to be challenged. Visibility is a prerequisite for tackling prejudice, which is an important part of any fight against discrimination. However, discrimination is not simply "prejudice plus power", it is structural and an integral part of the society we live in. That society is capitalist, and the politics of opposing discrimination have to be anti-capitalist.

The problem for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people is that we lose our visibility in anti-capitalist organisations, just as we do in mainstream political parties. Lesbian and gay socialists initiated identity-based organisation because issues around sexual orientation were dismissed by the parties to which they belonged. The Gay Liberation Front in the US saw itself as revolutionary, and part of a "movement" allied to organisations like the Black Panthers, engaging them over homophobic statements. The GLF's demise came as the lesbians left in protest at gay male sexism, then white middle class gay men decided they wanted to prioritise issues that affected them and formed the Gay Activists' Alliance. The latter had been prefigured by the expulsion of the Communist founders of the Mattachine Society by those who thought they had a better chance of winning reforms as "loyal Americans". There is a well-established tendency towards conservatism in identity-based political organisations.

One of the problems with revolutionary socialism has been the focus on economic issues, due to unquestioning acceptance of Marx's analysis of capitalist society in terms of relationships with the means of production. Until Gay Liberation, homosexuality was viewed as either a "bourgeois deviation" from a healthy proletarian lifestyle, or a side issue to be treated with compassion. Gay members of the International Socialists (now the Socialist Workers' Party) in Britain faced bitter resistance to their attempts to get the party leadership to accept Gay Liberation in the '70s. Eventually, the leadership adopted an Equality model rather than Liberation, producing a shopping list of demands to be tacked on to the party's politics. Exhausted by the struggle and felled by this sucker punch, the gay liberationists left the party.

Coming out as an affiliate of the Solidarity Federation in the '90s presented me with no such problems of acceptance, nor did it those who had come out before, or since. The organisation's priorities and culture try to reflect working class diversity, and it doesn't assume that everyone is like the existing membership. I have found the acceptance of diversity implicit in federalism a good base to start addressing issues around gender and sexuality by applying anarcho-syndicalist principles to them.

Identity-based politics is wholly inadequate for human liberation, as is a revolutionary politics that fails to actively oppose all forms of oppression. Sexism, racism, heterosexism and discrimination against the old, the sick and the disabled are an integral part of capitalist society. "Shopping lists" of demands are inadequate. Nothing less than opposing all oppression will do. Recognising homophobia is not enough, we need to understand heterosexism, and to combat it through direct action.

Anarcho-syndicalism is a social movement against capitalism and the state organised on the same principles as those of the society we want to create. There is no distinction between discrimination at work and discrimination in housing, health care, etc. Violence, prejudice and harassment is opposed wherever it occurs. Demonstrations and slogans are not enough; effective organisation is needed.

The better alternative to identity-based politics will only replace it when it is seen to combat discrimination effectively. Exposing the failures of lesbian and gay equality is not enough. Until the effective revolutionary alternative is big, active and proves itself, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people will continue to hope for reforms from politicians, no matter how many times their trust is betrayed.

THE PROBLEM FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDERED PEOPLE IS THAT WE LOSE OUR VISIBILITY IN ANTI-CAPITALIST ORGANISATIONS, JUST AS WE DO IN MAINSTREAM POLITICAL PARTIES

letters

Send letters to:
DA-SF (letters),
PO Box 1095,
Sheffield S2 4YR.
All letters are welcome, but space is always very short. Make yours incisive, brief and questioning if you want it printed in full.

Monkey Business

DA crew,

I saw you were doing the next issue of DA on mismanagement at the same time I collected one of those office Emails of tired old jokes (for tired old people). One of them seemed particularly appropriate so I thought I'd share it, seeing as I am bored, bored, bored here at work and the boss has skulked off to lunch.

The organisation is like a tree full of monkeys on different limbs at different levels, some climbing up, some fooling around, some simply just idling.

The monkeys on top look down and see a tree full of smiling faces. The monkeys at the bottom look up and see nothing but a tree full of arseholes.

Well, that's it.

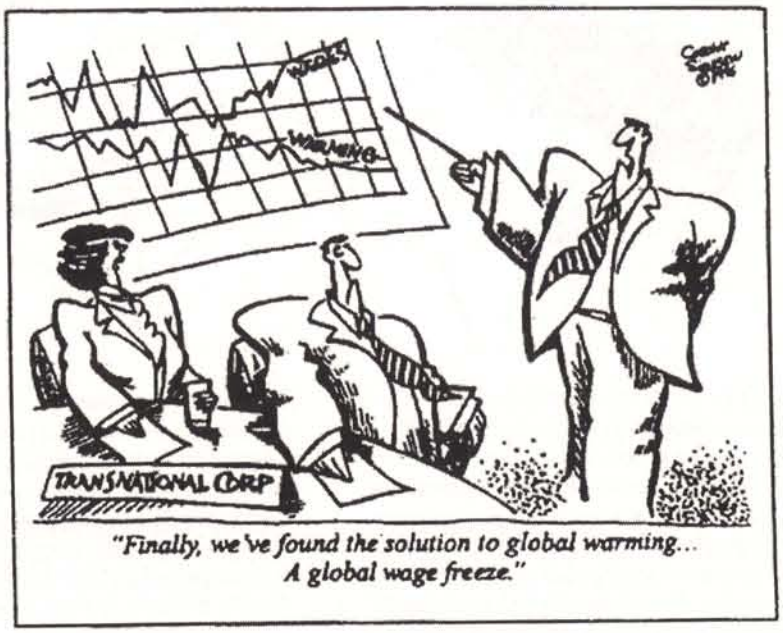
GM.

Correction

In DA 15, we incorrectly described Chris Graham-Bell, chairman of Millivres-Prowler, as a leading light in London Mardi Gras (LMG). In fact, we meant Colin Bell, who is the chairman of LMG.

This was an honest mistake but it doesn't invalidate the implication that Millivres-Prowler is pro-LMG. The Gay Times, its flagship title, won the lucrative contract to produce the various LMG magazines around the festival on July 1st 2000. Since they are a business, they are unlikely to oppose an event that provides such opportunities.

Another interesting fact about the LMG magazines is that the first bidder was Associated Newspapers, publishers of the Daily Mail, Mail on Sunday, Evening Standard and Metro (which described Section 28 as the law which "bans gay lessons" – Shakespeare in Polari, anyone?). The Gay Times crowed about beating these homophobic scum to the contract, which is supposed to be some kind of victory for the Gay & Lesbian Community. Remember, their profits are our liberation!



"Finally, we've found the solution to global warming... A global wage freeze."

Millennium Doom

Dear DA,

It really is interesting to see how governments take delight in wasting people's money on stupid projects.

The Dome should never have been built because the money should have been spent on the elderly and disabled, hospitals, etc.

The disgusting mess is a perfect and brilliant yet pathetic example of irresponsible and illogical thinking of government. There are far more important projects than this Teflon junk heap - the list the cash could be used on correctly is endless, but what we have instead is rubbish held up by steel girders and steel ropes which is all clever but quite useless and ugly.

You may think I do not like the Dome? Well, you are correct, as it is a disgrace and a revolting waste of money. If it must be buildings, it would have been better spent on affordable housing for those who need a roof over their head but, what have we got? We have been lumbered with one of the world's biggest white elephants which has lost money ever since it was built and opened. Even the publicity that went to open the Dome (or is that Doom) was a pathetic example of public relations blunder and cockup. So all I can say is...well done all and better luck next time, because from what we have seen so far, you need all the luck you can get and muster...what fun.

SR.

Tribute to Jim Allen

Born into a working-class Catholic family in Miles Platting, Manchester, in 1926, Jim left school at 13 and never read a hardback until the age of 21. After serving in the army and travelling around Europe working casually, he became a convinced and life-long Marxist and political activist. During his time as a miner at a Manchester colliery in the late '50s, he edited the rank and file paper The Miner, for which he was blacklisted by the industry. He was also expelled from the Labour Party in 1962 after attacking Hugh Gaitskell.

He worked as a writer on Coronation Street for 18 months in the mid '60s, before making his name on the BBC with dramas such as The Lump, The Big Flame, Days of Hope, The Spongers and United Kingdom. He continued his working partnership with Ken Loach, with films such as Hidden Agenda, Raining Stones, and Land and Freedom. His play Perdition (which examined the complicity between Zionist leaders and Nazis in wartime Hungary) caused a storm of protest and could not be staged for many years. Jim once said of his work, "My films blow the whistle, rise above the truth, engage the audience intellectually and emotionally. After a film, I hope the audience demand answers and action. I'm not keen on sending them to bed happy - I want them angry to get change."

There is a Tribute to Jim Allen's life and work on Saturday 7th October at the Cornerhouse in Manchester, organised by Jim's family, friends and local trade unionists (details 0161-200-1500).

Self ~~Mis~~management

Imagine a self-managed society; a society which is democratic, and where each and every person is free to develop their individuality and well-being on an equal basis. Where happiness and contentment are achieved not simply by more commodity production, but by individual and collective free will. A utopian dream?

Central to the idea of a self-managed society is workers' control, since this is the first stage in transforming the work process. A democratic workplace – one under control of the workers themselves – is an essential pre-requisite to the creative workplace. Claims that today's society is democratic are ridiculous, when the working economy, which takes up so much of our time, is controlled by so few.

Self-management encourages that most basic of human needs; creativity. This is nothing to do with the world of commercial art, or the fashion for particular painters, whose pictures are used by the rich as a means of storing the value they rob from workers in the form of profit. Creativity is about people getting pleasure from expressing themselves. It is how people reconnect with themselves, regain control, and escape the alienation of capitalism.

For some people, there is a creative aspect to work. However, most people must tolerate being controlled by others and produce something that they have little or no interest in. Work under capitalism is generally an alienating process, in which people sell their body and mind for a given period. Fulfilment comes in non-work activities. Capitalist work has artificially divided up our lives into bits we have some control over, and work, which we don't.

The division between work and creativity is most acute within the non-professional working class. Many middle class jobs are part of a 'career'. Daily tasks are challenging and bring individual achievement, and often include some self-managed time. The contrast with typical working class jobs could hardly be greater.

With work tasks which are repetitive, mind bogglingly boring, regimented, overseen, and often unsafe, it is not surprising that people who do them view the whole process with profound hatred. Such jobs are mostly low paid, so we have to work long hours in order to make a basic wage. Those of us with kids and/or domestic duties (mostly women) are forced to combine the two types of work, leaving virtually no free time. There is little space for working class expression and creativity.

We can make our (and others') jobs much more palatable, simply by replacing mismanagement with direct self-management. Under our control, we can transform the workplace so it includes individual and collective expression.

Self-management and creative work is not just some utopian dream for some future revolution. Organising ourselves now means we can begin taking back some control immediately, by constantly challenging the managers' right to manage. Developing democratic structures involves getting together for regular workplace meetings, within which we can discuss the problems we face, find solutions and seek to force them on management. While it is a long way off, the clear aim of such efforts is to keep winning the daily battles with management, until we have won back so much control within the workplace that it can no longer be contained by capitalism.

Workplace organisation is only one anarcho-syndicalist strategy. Equally crucial is the reason why we were seeking self-management in the first place – freedom. In order to be free to develop our own culture and our own creativity, we need to start making the space and resources to do it. The aim of anarcho-syndicalists is to provide the cultural support structure in order that people can begin to develop their individuality. Local groups of people, discussing and acting against the dominant capitalist culture, are inevitably developing their alternative culture as they break down the alienating illusion that currently surrounds us.

Education in the truest sense – that is, undertaken collectively on equal terms, as a free, voluntary social activity - has always been central to anarcho-syndicalism. Nowhere was this truer than in Spain in 1936-8, when anarcho-syndicalist organisations set up free schools *en masse* as part of a spontaneous explosion of cultural development which took place in the revolution. Self-education raises confidence and belief in oneself. It is an important ingredient in both personal liberation and the new culture based on human solidarity, as opposed to the dominant capitalist culture based on narrow self-interest.

Though the western working class have gained materially, the need for an alternative culture has never been so urgent. On many estates, people, faced with an hostile environment, have retreated in the home. Children are kept indoors and their growing cultural appetites are fed with capitalist hogwash. Expression is something other people do, and we are conditioned to passively consume. Culture is reduced to a few old sayings our grandparents might have used, even community identity is a confused, empty shell of its former self.

Creating a self-managed society goes beyond mere democracy. Democracy is the only means of creating a society based on freedom - but it is not the only ingredient. The idea that life must be made up of working hours broken up by intermittent periods of leisure, to be spent passively watching TV, visiting the latest retail/novelty spectacle, etc., is just as much crap as the idea that we need managers. There is no good reason why we cannot start change now, by simply taking the initiative in local groups and workplaces, and challenging the status quo.

CREATING A SELF-MANAGED SOCIETY GOES BEYOND MERE DEMOCRACY. THE IDEA THAT LIFE MUST BE MADE UP OF WORKING HOURS BROKEN UP BY INTERMITTENT PERIODS OF LEISURE... IS JUST AS MUCH CRAP AS THE IDEA THAT WE NEED MANAGERS

Beaten Up, Fitted Up, Locked Up!

Mark Barnsley and 'The Pomona Incident'. A Miscarriage of Justice.
Available from Plain Wordz, PO Box 381 Huddersfield HD1 3XX. £2

The British Police and Judiciary have a long (and no doubt proud) tradition of fitting people up. Some miscarriages of justice do not get the publicity they deserve, and the case of Mark Barnsley and what has become known as 'The Pomona Incident' is surely one of them. This pamphlet goes some way towards raising the profile of a case which all political activists would do well to give consideration to.

On a summer afternoon in 1994, Mark and a family friend went for a walk taking Mark's six-week-old daughter with them. They stopped for a drink at 'The Pomona' public house in Sheffield. After verbally abusing Mark's friend, a group of fifteen middle-class students attacked Mark using a glass or bottle, fists, boots and a knife, and chased him for 150 yards. The police were called and the nightmare began. If you live in a city with a university, you will be well aware of the behaviour of some of the cretins which pass as students when drunk and in a large group.

None of the students was ever charged in relation to the unprovoked attack on Mark Barnsley. Instead, Mark has found himself serving twelve years for G.B.H. The pamphlet uses quotes from the evidence given, much of it from the prosecution, to show that the students attacked Mark without justification. There are references from people who have known Mark for many years which show that violence is not in his nature. The questionable summing up from the judge is dealt with, as is the withholding of evidence from the defence by the C.P.S. The so-called newspaper 'The Star' and its victimisation of Mark Barnsley has a section of its own. Of particular interest is the account of the murder of Eric Cobourne by middle-class students in 1995, and the contrast between their treatment and that of working-class Mark Barnsley. I won't spoil it for anyone who intends to purchase this pamphlet, but anyone who still has the idea that British justice is impartial (and if you are reading this, that won't be you), will receive a rude awakening.

The story continues for Mark Barnsley, his family and friends, and this pamphlet proves if you are known to the police for your political activities (and if you are reading this, that will be you, most likely), you could well fall victim to a police fit-up similar to this.

Personally, I would like to see a follow-up to this pamphlet telling us how the withheld evidence was released, thereby overturning the conviction and setting Mark free. In the meantime, more publicity and more support will continue to be needed.

I defy anyone to read this pamphlet and not be left with a sense of rage at the British state and the system which places innocent people in prison. Blair tells us the class war is dead. Not while there are cases like 'The Pomona Incident', it isn't.

The Ingerland Factor

Home truths from football.
Edited by Mark Perryman.
Mainstream Publishing 1999, 9.99, ISBN 1 84018 211 3.

The contributors to this book about the relationship between English national identity and the England football team range from real fans, through celebrity supporters, to journalists representing footballing enemies and the cultural studies mafia. The idea was obviously to cover all the angles, but it doesn't always work that way.

In the title essay, Perryman, founder of the Philosophy Football t-shirt business, meanders through the meaning of 'Englishness'. He touches on the fashionable topic of post-British English identity, but the piece doesn't really go anywhere. He slags off New Labour, being old Labour, but writes about "re-branding Ingerland" and buys into the myth of "patriotism". There are also some real highlights.

By far, the best take on the subject comes from Kevin Miles, of the Football Supporters' Association, in conversation with fellow national officer Alison Pilling. He alone confronts the reality of being English, a football fan, and opposing nationalism/patriotism. As he puts it, Team England are his "second favourite team", after Newcastle United. Miles' real concern is with the welfare of working-class fans going to tournaments overseas for a holiday, not with how he can feel good about "patriotism", even though he's a socialist.

Black ex-pro Richie Moran gives a rare first-hand account of racism in the game. Unsurprisingly, this is contrasted by what he feels is the collusion of black footballers and media commentators with racism. He cites Garth Crooks' defence of Peter Schmeichel after the latter allegedly called Ian Wright a "dirty black bastard" in the heat of the moment, citing his record as a pro. The alleged insult was exposed by a lip-reading fan on telly, not by Wright, who claimed it wasn't his job to get a fellow pro into trouble. Moran contrasts this refusal to speak out with Wright's usual forthright attitude, and his "appearance" in the presence of Martin Luther King in an advert at the time.

Liz Crolley uses gender issues to tackle the assumption that football is being "feminised" by the "new fans". She examines hooligan author Dougie Brimson's 'The geezer's guide to football', and finds herself relating to a lot of Brimson's points in spite of his deliberately offensive sexism. This is important, as the phenomenon of the "new fan" is resented by the vast majority of long-standing regular football supporters, and separating opposition to them from machismo, racism and hooliganism is vital.

In addition, there are fascinating pieces by a German and an Argentinian journalist to put English football nationalism and hooliganism in context with that of our footballing enemies. Most of the rest is disposable, I'm afraid, but it's a book worth reading as an introduction to some of the issues concerning fan welfare and working-class culture.

Language and Power in the Creation of the USSR, 1917-1953. Michael G Smith

Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1998. 294 pages.

This academically-inclined book critically examines three broad areas of official Soviet linguistic policy between the Revolution and Stalin's death in 1953. Its value is in showing how language, just like many other aspects of Soviet life, came under the heavy hand of the Marxist centralised state.

The first area dealt with is the Russian language. Discussion of approaches to the teaching of literacy in Russian is detailed, especially concerning the shift from more experimental methods in the early Soviet period to more traditional methods

Big Green Rip-off?

The Big Green Gathering is an annual event held on a large organic farm near Warminster in Wiltshire. This year was the biggest yet and thousands of people from all over the country came to camp and celebrate a 'vision of our Green future'.

There were various workshops, children's events, cafes, stalls selling a wide range of goods, and bands playing live on wind and sun powered PA systems. The site was split into different areas, including Campaigns, Crafts, Healing and Earth Energies. The alternative technology and various campaigns were interesting and the music varied. One of the best experiences though could be found just sitting round your campfire talking, playing and singing.

Overall though, it did not live up to its build-up. While it was very good on the green and alternative technology issues, there were other, more disturbing aspects of the camp that showed it was, sadly, a mirror image of 'straight' society. A prime example was the treatment of workers on the site. At one of the cafés, the boss went round with a large gong waking up his staff telling them to, "Get up and start making (him) some money. The café was open 24 hours, and the staff seemed to be working long shifts with meagre breaks. It seems that, while multi-nationals and global capitalism are wrong, 'local' capitalism is alright. Even the organisers' staff were volunteers who worked there in return for a free ticket and food. Again, they were expected to work eight-hour shifts with no breaks. One of them commented; "I had the choice of being on security or cleaning the toilets; I wish I'd chosen the toilets."

As for the healing and earth energies, it seemed that anyone could set themselves up as a 'Universal Healer'. Just quote some suitably obscure aspect of an eastern-sounding philosophy, and people will pay you to wave your arms around them, bang gongs at them, turn them upside down, and thus cure all their ills and problems. Next year I'm thinking of going as 'Psychoanalix the Druid', he from the 'Asterix The Gaul' comics. The whole emphasis was that any problems you may have are basically for you to deal with as an individual. It is something inside you that is wrong - no recognition of society and the effect it can have on us.

There were many varied stalls, but you had to be pretty well off to afford some of the stuff. Most of the traders had nothing to do with the related culture - even the guy selling 'Native Irish metalwork' sounded like an Oxbridge graduate. Again, the profit motive was strong – it seemed everyone was out for a quick buck, including selling drink from the local supermarket to anyone gullible enough, including kids. Other kids were attending workshops to make jewellery, kites etc., then setting up a blanket and selling the stuff on! Copying their parents, it seems. All in all, the Big Green gathering people need to look closely at their new society, which seems to be Green Capitalism. A couple of people said to me, "wouldn't it be nice if everyone could live like this all the time". My answer was no.

Index On Censorship

#04/00

Index on Censorship comes out bi-monthly in paperback book form with nearly 200 pages and only half a dozen ads. Cut from similar cloth as Red Pepper, IoC rounds up the usual lefty suspects and not a few household names as contributors. This issue includes surprisingly, Mikhail Gorbachev on censorship in Russia. Presumably Gorby knows all about this subject after his time as Soviet première. Thankfully, it is only a short piece, although he still gets in a plug for the Gorbachev Foundation.

The two main areas of focus of this edition are sport and Australia. 'This Sporting Lie' is a collection of 8 essays on different aspects of the way in which the lofty (and mostly phoney) ideals of sport have been subsumed by the needs of global capital. From the exploitation of football fans to the drug scandals, from racism in sport to state repression of athletes, these articles take their subject apart.

Similarly, the focus on Australia is a collection of pieces by various authors, only this time looking specifically at censorship. Australia has had massive amounts of censorship law passed in the last few years aimed at Aborigines, immigrants, journalists and Web-users, amongst others. As with sport, the issue is thoroughly dissected in a series of fairly short pieces.

The short Culture section deals with two views on the relationship between cricket and society. Diran Adebayo looks at how Britain's Imperial decline is mirrored in the fortunes of the England cricket squad. CLR James muses on West Indian cricket's place in a post colonial setting and how the history of Windies' cricket is bound to the social, cultural and class conflicts of the 20th *century.*

The annoying part about some of these articles is the fact that they are so brief and are followed by a plug for the authors' book. It is possible to get the impression that the whole of IoC is nothing more than a glorified anthology designed to wet the appetite and stimulate mass book buying. Having said that, it is still a worthwhile read and is bound to lead most readers into areas they might not normally come across. A bit on the expensive side and not what many would call revolutionary, but easy to read, well written and produced. However, at £8.99 a time, it might be advisable to try it at your local library first. If they haven't got it, then ask them to stock it [and while you are there, ask them to stock DA as well! -ed]

from the late 1930s onward.

Secondly, official policies regarding the various (non-Russian) languages of the Soviet Union are described. Included here are the relative positions of Russian and local languages; the rise of the practice of introducing new words direct from Russian; and the ludicrous policy of devising writing systems based on the Latin alphabet for some sixty languages, then ditching them in favour of systems based on Russian Cyrillic.

Thirdly, developments in Soviet linguistics are discussed. The 'Eurasianist' period, for instance, denied the linguistic ties between Russian and the other Indo-European languages, and instead emphasised its ties to the east. Crazier still were the claims of Marxism, dominant between the late 1930s and early 1950s, that different stages in language evolution match the different stages of Marxist economic evolution. Or, to put it another way, languages could be categorised as 'feudal', 'capitalist' or 'socialist'.

While much of the specific politicisation of language policy seems unique to the Soviet Union, other aspects are not. Controversies surrounding mother-tongue education in Russian language schools are echoed in the debate between 'conservatives' and 'liberals' in the English speaking world. The rights of minority languages, and their relations with majority languages, are still surrounded by political debate and violence throughout the world.

Lobster

#39 Summer 2000
214 Westbourne Avenue, Hull
HU5 3JB

Lobster is the near legendary brainchild of Robin Ramsey, which deals with cover-ups and conspiracy theories within the corridors of power. Previous editions have dealt with such issues as American and Tory intervention in British unions, New Labour and the spooks, JFK, and plots by MI5/6/CIA. That's not to say that Lobster is pandering to the audience forever more bizarre conspiracy theories. There are no stories like "aliens ate my hamster" or "JFK's brain found on Mars" or other such weirdness beloved of the underground Fortean style press. This publication is based on solid research and, while much of it might leave you feeling paranoid, that is simply an unfortunate by-product of uncovering the truth in the murky world of dirty tricks.

Included in this issue, there are excellent articles on Di's death, Scientology and the CIA, New Labour, the EU and the odd conspiracy theory or two thrown in. Copious footnotes abound for those who want to read further and a net guide is included for the cyber geeks. Lobster doesn't just report, however, and some of the most interesting articles are those which raise awkward questions. For instance, in "Right meets Left", Ramsey compares the attitudes of right-wingers and lefties toward each other and asks if they are not simply mirror images. Do we consider each other lower forms of life and, if so, are we missing something when we simply write people and their views off? It makes uncomfortable reading but begs for some self-examination of our rhetoric, if nothing else. There is also a review section and letters which go to make up an indispensable magazine.

FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

No ocean separating our desire for justice.

Double CD and booklet in English, Basque and Spanish
2000 - Gora Herriak/Esan Ozenki Records E0182CD

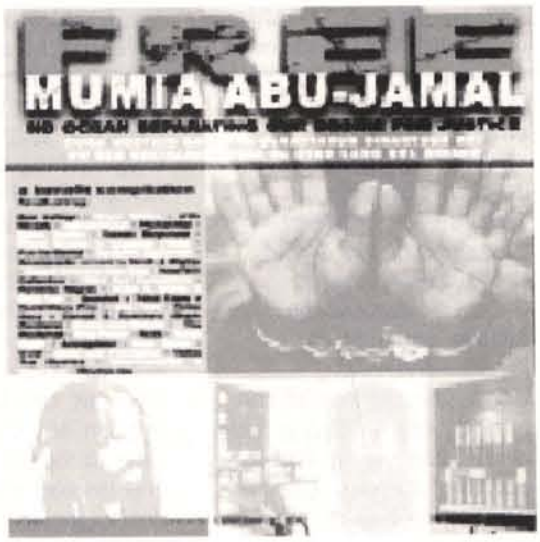
Mumia Abu-Jamal is an African American journalist, former member of the Black Panthers and death row inmate for 18 years. This benefit CD combines some excellent music spread over two CD's and a brief but informative booklet about Mumia Abu-Jamal. Abu-Jamal is a prominent journalist, named "voice of the voiceless", who did much to highlight the state's harassment, intimidation and murder of the oppressed in the United states and the MOVE organisation in particular. He has published a great deal of work both before and since being thrown in to gaol for the alleged murder of a policeman - this despite substantial evidence of his innocence, but not of his guilt. Mumia Abu-Jamal is currently held in solitary confinement 23 hours a day, with 24 hours a day light and constant CCTV monitoring, - and, of course, with the ongoing, constant threat of state sanctioned death. His fate is, at the time of writing, once again in the hands of representatives of the system who have sentenced him to death. This CD and booklet is part of an ongoing international campaign to save the life of Abu-Jamal and gain his freedom. And a top CD it is as well.

31 tracks over two CD's of mainly British hip hop, dub, drum+bass, punk, jazz and what have you, but with bands represented from all round the world. Amongst the those who have donated (often exclusive) tracks are dub poet Benjamin Zephaniah, Asian Dub Foundation, the classic angry skinny Glaswegian stoner music of Primal Scream, Chumbawamba (of course) in country mood with the Alabama 3, noisy old Pitchshifter, loud and angry Fun-da-mental and loads of others. Lots of angry and hopeful, shouting beat driven reasons to be angry and hopeful. If you like this sort of thing, you should look out for this CD; if you don't know, hunt it down and find out; and if you don't, buy it anyway - you can try listening whilst reading the booklet and, if you still don't like it, you can then pass on the whole lot to someone else - spread the word.

The CD and accompanying booklet was compiled by the Keble Kulture Projekt in Bristol and released on the Basque label Esan Ozenki - it is distributed widely around the world, with distribution in the UK through AK Press in Edinburgh. All money made will go to either the Abu-Jamal case or to campaigns supporting him.

If you want to know where/how to get it, contact:
AK ak@akdin.demon.co.uk
Tel. 0131 5555156;
Keeble K.P. keeble@marsbard.com
http://marsbard.com/kebele
Tel. 0117 9399469
Esan Ozenki Records
info@esan-ozenki.com
http://www.esan-ozenki.com
Tel. 34 - 943 63 31 37

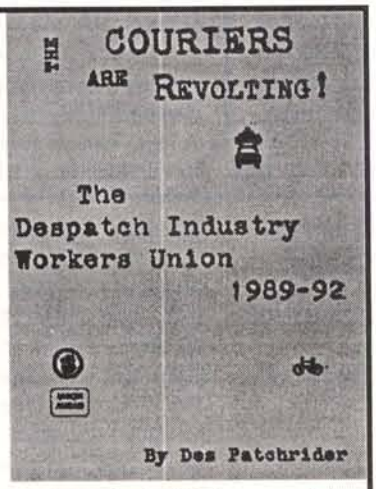
For more information about Mumia Abu-Jamal, try these websites:
Free Mumia http://www.mumia.org/
Refuse & Resist Mumia page: http://mojo.calyx.net/~refuse/mumia/index.html
Mumia must live http://www.callnetuk.com/home/mumia/first.htm



The Couriers are Revolting!

The Despatch Industry Workers Union 1989-92. Des Patchrider

Kate Sharpley Library
£1.50 ISBN: 1-873605-67-6



I do like the pseudonym. Set up by disaffected despatchers as an anarcho-syndicalist union, the DIWU became legendary in a few short months, in standing up to an industry that itself is legendary - but for different reasons. The booklet has a wider cause than simply modern union history or amusing nostalgia - in its own words, it attempts to "provide an example or inspiration for workers to organise similarly in other industries". Indeed, this is essential reading. Could always do with more on why DIWU is no longer around (and why that is important), but here's a pamphlet that is neither heavy nor about ancient history - yet it is about people who meant business and stood up to the bosses, with spectacular results. I won't ruin the story.

ANARCHISM VS. MARXISM

ECONOMIC THEORY AND THE REALITY OF EVERYDAY LIFE; ANATOMY OF A 150-YEAR FEUD

There is a deep-seated hostility between Marxist and anarchist traditions. The venom still flows, over 150 years since the first clashes between the libertarian socialists and authoritarians in the First International. The former group were dominated by the ideas of anarchism, the latter by Marxism. Isn't it about time they overcame their differences and began working together?

There are only two revolutionary traditions of any size. Both seek an end to capitalism as a means to bring about liberation. Both movements are relatively small, and both call for unity amongst the oppressed. Yet, both generally despise each other, with very little accommodation of differences. Surely, a common sense solution would be for the two traditions to reconcile their differences and form a united movement in opposition to the common enemy – capitalism?

Over the years, many groups and individuals have made similar calls. Noam Chomsky has argued that there is much to be gained from both traditions and has supported the idea that the ideas and methods of anarchism could be the means of broadening and enriching Marxism. No matter how desirable this approach might seem, fundamental differences remain between anarchism and Marxism preventing any such reconciliation. Indeed, at their core, it is difficult to see how anarchism and Marxism could be more different. The differences start with the 'view of the world' that the two traditions take.

Marxism is built on a critique of economic development. It is economic development that shapes and drives human development. The economic mechanism determines the course of events. Anarchism, on the other hand, is a movement of struggle. It is based on the premise that the desire for freedom is fundamental to humanity. Desire, therefore, drives us to struggle against oppression and, in so doing, creates change and human development. For Marxism, human history is about power over (and the rise and fall of) the economic system. For anarchism, it is about struggle, driven by the desire for ever-greater freedom.

SCIENCE LESSON

Marxism sees itself as a movement of science. Marx claimed to have discovered the scientific laws through which human development can be understood. The result is a scientific theory through which human action can be interpreted, the centrepiece of which is the idea that the economy determines society. In fact, society is merely the social superstructure bolted onto the economic system. Thus, when the economic system changes, the rest of society changes.

For Marxists, economic change determines history. The production process is dynamic, particularly during rapid technological development, as over the last few hundred years in the west. The result is economic instability, in which the forces of production are held back by the relations of production. In other words, society cannot keep pace with the advances taking place within the economy. As the economy advances, new social relations are formed, which conflict with the now-outmoded existing social system. A struggle ensues between old and new. The old ruling elite attempt to maintain power, but inevitably, a new elite emerges - made powerful by economic advancement from new technology. In time, the old order are swept from power and new social structures are built.

Thus, 17th century feudal society crumbled and the feudal lords were swept aside by the emergence of a new, aggressive system. The new pretenders were those who had capitalised on the new technology and made themselves powerful – the capitalists. Capitalism was born, and became the dominant order, due to its economic advantage. As Marx projected his theory into the future, he predicted that capitalism would give way to communism; a classless society based on economic equality.

For Marxists, human beings are only bit-players in the economic scheme of things. Reflecting on individuality, or even on society, is of little use. The self-justifying superstructure formed around the economy (dominant politics, legal system, ethics, intellectual ideas, etc.), discourages all but the most conventional views of society. There is room for no alternative; economic relations determine that only those who support the current system get heard or get power. Under feudalism, the serf felt bound by loyalty to master and king. Only when technological change took place and the economic power structure shifted did this loyalty weaken, bringing struggle and revolution to the fore.

Marx had little time for ethical or moral dimensions. He was dismissive of ethical socialism, seeing it as utopian, and without a clear mechanism for engineering the change needed to bring it about. He preferred the rational against the emotional. His was a scientific theory of socialism. His critique of capital and grasp of economics was undoubted. However, his misplaced determinism lacked a realistic view of the consequences of a revolutionary strategy based on a vanguard seizing power. Power corrupts. Power, not economic control, is the key. Thus, starting in the wrong place, Marxists began painting a picture of revolution, and soon found themselves in a corner, surrounded by wet paint, with nowhere to go.

BASIC INSTINCT

Anarchism is rooted in the moral and ethical wing of socialism. It is based on the fact that human beings are capable of feeling

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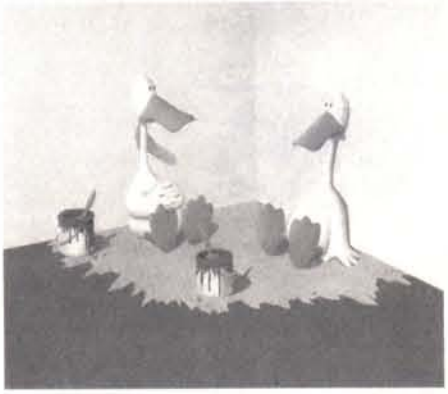

outrage at injustice, and will inevitably struggle against it. The source of moral outrage is a common humanity, which binds human beings together.

'Common humanity' is the sense of togetherness that comes from being in society. It is learned. We are not born as fully-formed individuals created by some all-powerful god, nor are we driven by some individual competitive instinct that sees everyone else as a threat to our survival. If it were the case, life would be a short, brutal struggle against each other. 'Common humanity' is the solidarity we get from recognising that strength and security come from associating with each other.

Anarchism holds that human beings, physically weak and faced with surviving in the natural environment, banded together in collective labour in order to survive. From this collective labour, society evolved. The power of speech, thought and will were developed, allowing conscious thought to take precedence over animal instinct. Through society, we learned to suppress baser instincts and replace them with social relations. We developed morals, and a sense of moral outrage. We developed relations based on co-operation and identity; we developed a common humanity.

Through coming together in collective labour, commonly held emotions such as compassion, empathy, humour, guilt and a sense of injustice developed. These form the basis of human solidarity, without which society could not survive. Dependent upon society for physical security, our social and emotional development continued, until we became dependent upon it for emotional security too. Without others, morals, feelings and communication are of little use, and we are isolated and alone. Outside society, we would soon lose our humanity. We would also lose our individuality – for this is defined in terms of our differences with others in society. Only in society can we confirm our humanity and our individuality. Anarchism is therefore based on the premise that society is the source of our physical and emotional well being. Through society, we are freed from the slavery of instinct, and have free will and choice. From this, comes personal expression and the concept of individuality.

Through education in the widest sense, the collective thoughts of society are transmitted to children. These form the raw material which feeds our intellectual, emotional and moral development as we grow up. Every child is born at the end of human history, and the accumulated knowledge of humanity is the gift of past generations to today's. This stock of knowledge is tapped into in the process of individual development. Through the experiences that life brings, this stock is added to by future generations, further enriching the collective knowledge of society in the process.

REALITY CHECK

One major problem stands in the way of ever-greater freedom and human development through society. Oppression. This happens when groups of individuals seek to restrict society's gain in favour of their perceived personal gain. This has two effects. It damages society, which affects everyone. It also divides society into different groups, or classes. For a start, there are those doing the restricting and those who are not.

Perhaps the worst form of oppression is slavery, where human beings become the exclusive property of others. Denied the right to free expression and individual development, they become merely the extension of their master's will. Capitalism is a milder form of slavery. Instead of being owned by others, we are forced to sell ourselves to the capitalist for a set period, during which we become the extension of their will. During this period, we are controlled, forced to surrender our freedom to the god of profit.

Oppression is common in society, some may say inevitable. It stems from some individuals pretending to themselves that they will not suffer from making others suffer, moreover, they will gain from it. Since oppression is the denial of free expression, it undermines our individuality and our common humanity. Solidarity and social cohesion are undermined.

If oppression is inevitable, then, the anarchist would argue, it is even more inevitable that those who are oppressed will come together and struggle against the oppressor. Without fierce resistance to oppression, society would have crumbled into division long ago. The idea of a society of order-givers and slaves, the latter without any individuality or anything to gain from the arrangement, is simply repugnant nonsense to our sense of common humanity.

We are in society because it is how we define our individuality and exercise our free will. We can get these from nowhere else. Take them away, and we will rebel in order to claim them back. At work, we come together to challenge the right of managers to oppress us by removing our free will. To win some of it back, we enter a power struggle between the oppressor and the oppressed.

SEEING RED AND BLACK

For anarchism, the idea that human beings accept their oppression as the norm until technology-driven economic change fractures the status quo is nonsense. People are constantly aware of their oppression. The only thing which holds them in check is fear, whether physical and/or emotional. Fear is the idea that things could get even

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worse than they are. In this case, fear stems from people thinking (usually with sound reason) that if we fight our oppressor, we will be punished or otherwise suffer more. In other words, we feel we are in a position of weakness. We lack individual and/or collective confidence. We know what is happening is wrong, but see no alternative. We cannot control our lives. Confidence crises culminate in the idea that others may be able to make decisions better for us than we can ourselves. Maybe we need an oppressor to control us? By this time, not only are we in an emotional prison of our own making, we have thrown away the key.

The key, of course, is confidence in collective action. Action by ourselves – direct action – is not just an effective means of fighting back against oppression, it is also an antidote for the confidence crisis. Do a direct action, and conscious belief in your own abilities is raised. Do another, and it is raised again. Eventually, collective confidence is such that we can run our own struggles and, ultimately, our own lives. Collective direct action leads to the development of solidarity culture. This is the basis of the new society, in which the oppression fought by direct action will be eliminated. Thus, direct action is a positive physical, mental and emotional effort towards a better future. This is the essence of the anarcho-syndicalist idea of building the new society within the shell of the old.

CONTRASTS

For anarchism, it is not the objective conditions that are paramount, but the level of organisation aimed at combating those objective conditions. Anarchism therefore seeks to organise the oppressed against the oppressor. It is a movement of struggle against oppression, aimed at ever-greater human freedom. It is a movement towards ensuring that society's riches are at the disposal of all, so that all are able to make full use of their natural talents, hence enriching society still further.

In so far as it is a theory, anarchism is a theory of power. Since oppression is based on concentration of power, it can only be overcome in a society where power is not concentrated, but dispersed. The concentration of power stands in the way of human development.

Marxism argues that the communist society will bring a final end to all inequality, since it all stems from economic inequality, which communism will bring to an end. Anarchism seeks no such final utopia, final revolution, or culmination of human development. It views the struggle to ensure power is dispersed as a constant factor in human relations. What is most important is to disperse power by acting democratically in everything. Most crucially, the struggle itself must be democratic.

Undoubtedly, the economy - the system of goods/services exchange - is the dominant focus of power relations today. The aim of anarcho-syndicalism is to replace the capitalist economy with a democratic one. People will come together and decide collectively how and what to produce and provide. Aside from this democratically controlled economy, people will conduct their relationships freely.

Thus, we reach the core of the difference between Marxism and anarchism. Marxism is an economic theory which sees human history as the rise and fall of economic systems. Anarchism sees history as a struggle against oppression, with revolutions occurring when the struggle against oppression reaches a point where those in power can no longer control the desires of the oppressed. While there are countless interpretations of Marx, they all stand outside of society, as scientific theory. Anarchism is placed within the struggle of everyday life.

It was inevitable that Marxism and anarchism would come into conflict, and that they will remain so. Marxists believe the end of capitalist economic relations is enough, and the final revolution will follow. Benevolent leaders, those most enthused with Marxist theory, will take control until the uninformed masses are able to take over the running of society. Then, the 'transition' from state control to communism will take place. The anarchist, who views society as being about power, is inevitably horrified by such a plan. Back in the 1850s, they argued that it would lead to a dictatorship, with a new class of leaders, empowered through state power, controlling all aspects of human activity, to the detriment of all. This was the worst possible replacement for capitalism.

There is no middle way between the paths of authoritarian Marxism and libertarian anarchism. They are split, and have been since the split in the First International. Sure, anarchism can learn much from Marx's study of the political economy. But such a lesson can only be accommodated within the anarchism conceptualisation of power. Anarchism is against capitalism because it concentrates power – it is against Marxism and statism for the same reason. Above all, it is not an 'anti' idea, but a positive one – it is FOR the elimination of all relations/systems based on the concentration of power, since they are the root cause of inequality and oppression.

For more about the First International or anarchism/Marxism history in general, contact SelfEd about the distance learning course 'A History of Anarcho-syndicalism', including details of how to get the course materials for free. SelfEd, c/o PO Box 1095, Sheffield S2 4YR, or Email DA (see p.34).

About Solidarity Federation...

Solidarity Federation is the new solidarity movement. Formed in March 1994, it consists of a federation of groups and individuals across England, Scotland & Wales. The basic foundation of Solidarity Federation is the Local.

DOWN THE LOCAL

People are getting together to form Locals – Solidarity Federation groups. Locals put solidarity into practice. In time, each Local will have a premises as a base for solidarity action in the local community. Locals are organising or getting involved in local campaigns across a wide range of issues – both in the community and in workplaces. Issues are wide-ranging: defending our natural and local environment and health; opposing racism, sexism and homophobia; in fact, anything which defends or contributes to our mutual quality of life. It is all part and parcel of building a solidarity movement.

DIRECT ACTION

Apart from being the name of this Quarterly, Direct Action is the tool which Locals use in all their work. At a basic level, this can be simply the spreading of information through leaflets, local bulletins and public meetings to raise awareness and involvement locally.

However, Direct Action is not limited to spreading information. It means a physical presence in defending and promoting a better quality of life. Fundamental to Direct Action is the reality that we can only rely on ourselves to achieve our goals. While we reserve the right to take opportunities to fight for improvements to our quality of life now, the solidarity movement must always remain independent from those we are demanding from. Solidarity Federation will accept neither leadership, charity, nor guidance from government or business – instead, we must couple our principle of solidarity with the practice of self-reliance.

NETWORKING

Solidarity Federation members who work in the same work sector have formed Networks. Their purpose is to promote solidarity amongst workers. Networks also use Direct Action to fight for better pay and conditions. Networks form the basis of a completely new labour movement, nothing like the Trade Unions, which are weakened by having to abide by ridiculous laws, and by hierarchical power structures and self-interested paid officials. The fundamentally different nature of Networks fits their fundamentally different aim.

WHERE NEXT?

As Locals and Networks grow, they practise community and workers' self-management. Eventually, industries will be run by producers and consumers. In other words, by workers (in Networks) and people in the wider community (Locals), who want the goods and services they provide.

And this is no flight of fancy or text-book dream. As the solidarity movement grows in members and influence, so does the scope for action. Both the Locals and Networks have already established a reputation and are showing real results in membership and effectiveness.

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY

Capitalism is international, so we need to be organised globally to oppose it and build a viable alternative. Nationalism and patriotism lead to pointless and false divisions, used as tools to fuel economic and bloody wars. Solidarity Federation opposes these in favour of a movement built on global solidarity.

Solidarity Federation is the British section of the International Workers' Association (IWA), the anarcho-syndicalist association. This gives it essential international solidarity and experience from much larger sections, such as the CNT (Spain) and USI (Italy). Founded in 1922, the IWA has a long history of solidarity in action; by the 2nd World War, over 5 million people worldwide were affiliated. A combination of war, fascism, and soviet 'communism' all but destroyed the movement, but after the Spanish CNT re-emerged in the late 70s, the IWA had a new lease of life. Today, there are sections ranging from a few dozen to thousands of members, and growth is rapid. At the last IWA Congress in Madrid, another 7 new sections were affiliated from South America, Africa, Europe and the former Soviet Union.

GETTING INVOLVED

A global solidarity movement can only gather strength as many more people who share the same aims get involved. Contacting Solidarity Federation offers the possibility of contributing to this growing momentum.

It is not like joining a club, union or political party – rather, it is an opportunity to channel your efforts for change and, at the same time, benefit yourself from the experience.

For more info, write to the SolFed Contact Point below.

SF Contact Point: SF, PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE
Tel. 0181 374 5027
Email: manchesterSF@scandrac.demon.co.uk

Networks - make contact with others in your type of work-
Education Workers' Network, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW.
Public Service Workers' Network, PO Box 1681, London N8 7DN.
Communication Workers' Network, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW.

Locals - get involved locally in regular meetings and action-
North & East London SF, PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE. Tel. 0181 374 5027
Red & Black Club, PO Box 17773, London SE8 4WX. Tel. 0171 358 1854
South-west Solidarity, PO Box 741, Swindon SN1 3UG
South Herts SF, PO Box 493, St Albans AL1 5TW.
West Midlands SF, PO Box 6705, Redditch, Worcs. B97 6SQ
Norfolk & Norwich SF, PO Box 487, Norwich MLO, NR2 3AL.
Manchester SF, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW. Tel. 0161 232 7889.
Sheffield SF, PO Box 1095, Sheffield S2 4YR.
West Yorks Solidarity Federation, PO Box 5, Hebden Bridge, W. Yorks HX7 8YN

SF includes contacts across England, Scotland and Wales. Use the SF Contact Point above to make contact with groups and individuals near you.

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Return this form to: DA-SF, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW, England.

Events/Campaigns/Gatherings...

Solidarity Federation

Manchester SolFed

Support and Advice Sessions Drop in, last Tuesday of the month, 7pm, followed by Discussion Meeting, same day, 8.30pm.

September 26th - Mass media
October 31st - Casualisation Kills – The Simon Jones Case (7.30 start)
November 28th - Corporate Crime

All sessions open & free at: The Brow House, 1 Mabfield Road, Fallowfield, Manchester. Or contact Manchester SF, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW. 0161 232 7889

Education Workers' Network

For everyone in the education sector; cleaners, teachers, students, lecturers, admin., etc. Info from EWN, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW.

South-west Solidarity

Swindon-Bristol based but looking for contacts across SW England. Write for a free newsletter, visit the website! South-west Solidarity Federation, PO Box 741, Swindon, SN1 3UG. www.re-creation.ndirect.co.uk/sws.html

Norwich and Norfolk SolFed

Regular meetings in Norwich - contact us at our new address: PO Box 487, Norwich MLO NR2 3AL.

South Herts SolFed

Discussion Meetings 8pm, 2nd Wednesday of the month in St Albans (near main railway station). Contact South Herts SolFed, PO Box 493, St Albans AL1 5TW.

North & East London SolFed

Socials: Last Thursday of the month, 8pm, near Camden Tube. We also hold advice surgeries and have regular discussion meetings. For details of times and places, contact: SF, PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE. Tel. 0181 374 5027.

Catalyst

Freesheet of the Solidarity Federation - IWA

2nd issue of the quarterly freesheet is out now - with an emphasis on making the difference at work. If you like DA, you'll like Catalyst. Send a stamp or phone for your copy - or for a bunch to hand out at work or play. Catalyst, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW. Tel. 0161 232 7889. Email; manchesterSF@scandrac.demon.co.uk

Kasualisation Kills – The Simon Jones Case

Public meeting in Manchester, October 31st, 7.30pm. at:
The Brow House, 1 Mabfield Road, Fallowfield, Manchester.
Contact Manchester SF (address/phone opposite page) for directions or just turn up.

DA ON THE WEB

DA is pretty monochrome - and that's the way it's staying. So if you like pretty colours, get on the Web for the only technicolour DA production. Just slip into your local cybercafe or switch on, and at the right moment, type:
http://www.directa.force9.co.uk

SelfEd Collective

Sharing and developing practical ideas and skills for revolutionary activity

'A History of Anarcho-syndicalism'. 24 pamphlet-sized Units, plus the opportunity to participate in discussion meetings. Pamphlets are a quid each - or get them ALL FREE in FULL VERSIONS - easily downloadable from the new SelfEd website, launched in September 2000.

Link there from www.directa.force9.co.uk

Friends and Neighbours

[To get listed here, write to; DA (F&N). PO Box 1095, Sheffield S2 4YR, da@directa.force9.co.uk]

Simon Jones Campaign

For the latest and how to help, see www.simonjones.org.uk. Stickers, posters and a campaign video are available for a donation; cheques should be sent to Simon Jones Memorial Campaign, PO Box 2600, Brighton BN2 2DX.

Corner House

Latest Corner House Briefing Paper "The Malthus Factor: Poverty, Politics and Population in Capitalist Development" No 20, July 2000. GM, food supply and corporate dominance facts - available from The Corner House, PO Box 3137 Station Road Sturminster Newton Dorset DT10 1YJ. Email versions FREE; cornerhouse@gn.apc.org Paper copies £2, cheques to 'Corner House Research'. Ask for a list of other briefing papers.

March 2001 Global Women's Strike

On 8 March 2000, women in 64 countries went on strike! Prepare for 8th March 2001 - strike for a world which values all women's work & all women's lives, an end to no pay, low pay & too much work. Called & co-ordinated by the International Wages for Housework Campaign, Crossroads Women's Centre, 230a Kentish Town Road, London NW5 2AB. Tel: 020 7482 2496 Fax: 020 7209 4761 E-mail: womenstrike8m@server101.com Website: http://womenstrike8m.server101.com

Prague

September 24-26 – resisting the World Bank and IMF at their 55th annual meeting in Prague. For info. before and after – http://x21.org/s26 or http://go.to/s26

Covance Campaign

Covance Inc. claim to be the world's largest contract animal testing organisation, with labs and breeding centres all over the world. To get involved in surprise demos, weekly pickets, etc. at the Harrogate Lab, or to get campaign materials, contact Covance Campaign, PO Box 323, York. Tel. 07977 637 293.

Northern Anarchist Network

Next NAN – Unemployed & TU Centre, off the Rock, Bury, 30th September. Tel. 0161 707 9652.

London Anarchist Forum

LAF Meets Fridays, 8pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London.

Plain Wordz

Independent distributor of T-shirts, music, posters, info., books, cards, magazines, pamphlets, etc. All proceeds go to prisoner support campaigns. For a catalogue, send an SAE or IRC to Plain Wordz, PO Box 381, Huddersfield HD1 3XX. Email: plainwordz@hotmail.com

McDonalds - week of action

October 12th is McDonalds Workers' Day; October 16th is world anti-McDonalds day. London pickets details from http://www.mcspotlight.org/ or NELSF, PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE. Tel. 0181 374 5027

Local GMO Actions

Corporate Watch's website, www.gm-info.org.uk has regional maps showing each UK GMO-related site. Offices, etc. are also included. Also GE briefings available from Corporate Watch, 16b Cherwell St, Oxford OX4 1BG.

Civil Rights Caravan

Solidarity with asylum seekers, migrants and victims of racism. 15-17th Sept.; Coventry, Birmingham, Leicester, Oxford: 22-24 Sept.; Dover, Margate, Brighton: 29-1st Oct.; Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, Liverpool: 6-8th Oct; Exeter, Plymouth, Bristol: 14th Oct.; London - national demo, 1pm, Embankment. CARF, BM Box 8784 London WC1N 3XX. Email: info@carf.demon.co.uk Tel: 020 7837 1450.

Pride

Pride (London) aims to re-establish the Pride March as a community event in 2001. Membership is open to anyone who identifies as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgendered. Membership is £10 (£5 concessions). Contact: Pride (London), BCM Box 6097, London WC1N 3XX. Tel. 07071 781904. info@PrideLondon.org http://www.PrideLondon/org

Anarchist TU Network

To subscribe and get a bimonthly newsletter, Bread and Roses, send six stamps with your name and address and any union affiliation details to: Box EMAB (ATU), 88 Abbey Street, Derby DE22 3SQ. williamgodwin7@hotmail.com http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Parliament/2522

Kate Sharpley Library

KSL - the long running source and publisher of lesser known gems of history. For details of backlists, current pamphlets and projects, contact KSL, BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX. Send a stamp for a current newsletter.

fat cats

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